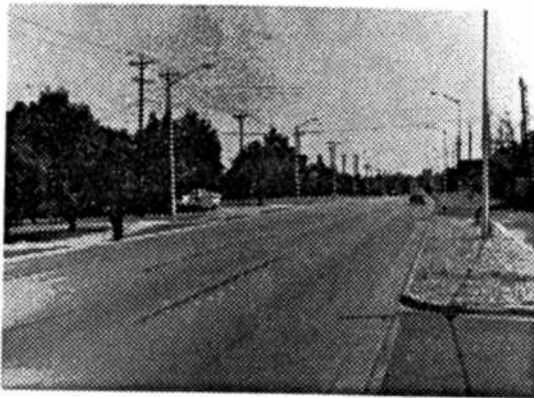
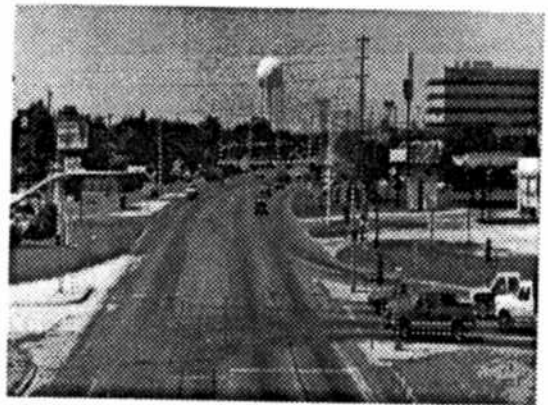


Buffalo Gap Road Corridor Study

June 1994



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Buffalo Gap Road Corridor Study

**Prepared by:
Planning Division
Department of Development Services**

June 1994

Mindy Manson, Assistant Director of Development Services for Planning
Ron Quarles, Senior Planner
Michael Bieniek, Planner I
Terry Vines, Graphics Technician

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Appendix

Introduction

BUFFALO GAP ROAD CORRIDOR STUDY

INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Study

Buffalo Gap Road is significant as a link between Abilene and the tourist attractions of the historic **village of Buffalo Gap** and the **Abilene State Park**. The corridor provides the last impression of the city for travelers making their destination to these recreational areas and the first impression for travelers coming into the city. Because of its significance, *the City of Abilene Thoroughfare Plan* identifies the corridor as a "**Visual Pathway**" recommended for protection against negative images and urban clutter through signage limitations and landscaping requirements by means of the Planned Development District.

In September of 1993 and January of 1994, the City Council approved the *Southwest Area Land Use Plan* and *Southwest Area Land Use Plan Phase II* respectively. The primary intent of the plans was to re-examine land use and development issues as a response to recent extensions of Rebecca Lane and Southwest Drive. It was recognized that the development potential of the area had increased significantly as a result of new opportunities to access large areas of vacant land and the increased vehicular circulation options.

Because of the links to Buffalo Gap Road by the Winters Freeway and Rebecca Lane, development within the Southwest Area will naturally have an impact on the continued development of the Buffalo Gap Road Corridor and vice versa. The intersection of Buffalo Gap Road and the Winters Freeway, located on the eastern edge of the Southwest Area, already serves as a commercial/retail activity area for the entire region. Because of the development potentials that exist for undeveloped land along Buffalo Gap Road, and the public's continued interest in ensuring the integrity and attractiveness of the area, staff initiated this study of the Buffalo Gap Road Corridor.

The Buffalo Gap Road Corridor Study is being conducted to address the continuing development activity in the southwest section of Abilene. The study is designed to recommend the best possible land use throughout the corridor. As development increases, it becomes necessary to study ways to mitigate any negative impacts of commercial activities such as heavy traffic. This is accomplished through analysis of current development patterns, identification of problems and the recommendation of potential solutions. One of the goals of this study is to help the area residents establish a sense of identity.

Survey Responses

In July of 1993, over five hundred questionnaires were sent to residents and property owners within the corridor. Staff received responses from 35 percent (170) of the property owners. In summary, the residents thought the corridor provides a positive impression. They indicated the majority of development for the vacant land should be residential (61 percent) and the remaining land should be commercial (35 percent). The respondents had the general opinion that traffic congestion was more prevalent and traffic circulation was more difficult within the developed areas of the corridor than in other parts of town. Results of the questionnaire are provided in the Appendix at the end of this study.

Some of the assets of the area were identified as the appearance of newness, attractive buildings, well-kept yards and landscaping, good access to Winters Freeway, low crime rates, and ample shopping opportunities. Some of the weaknesses of the corridor were listed as traffic congestion, (mainly during rush hour), potential for over development, lack of right-of-way maintenance, trash from commercial areas, high noise volumes from commercial areas, and too many portable banners, signs and billboards.

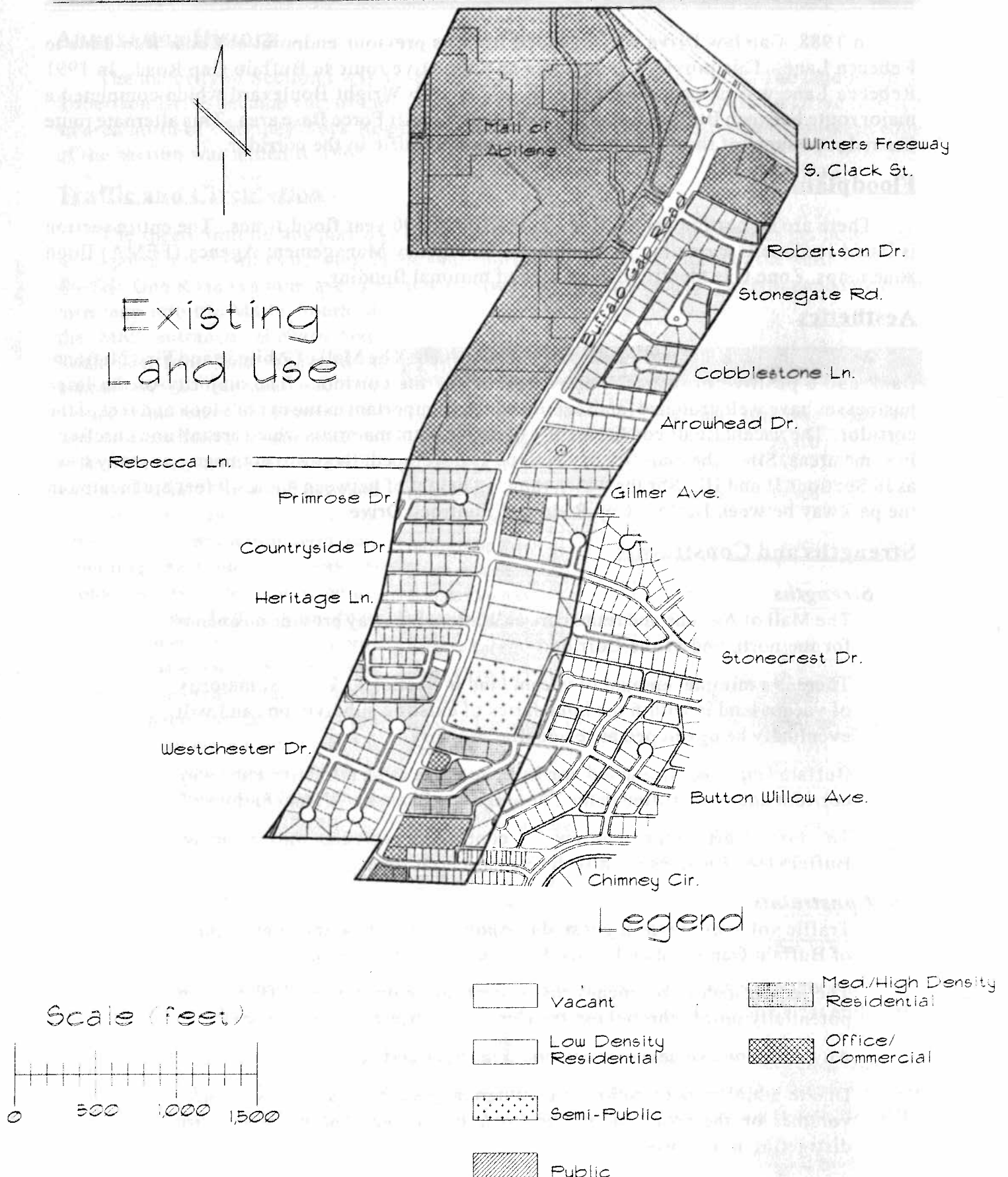
Study Contents

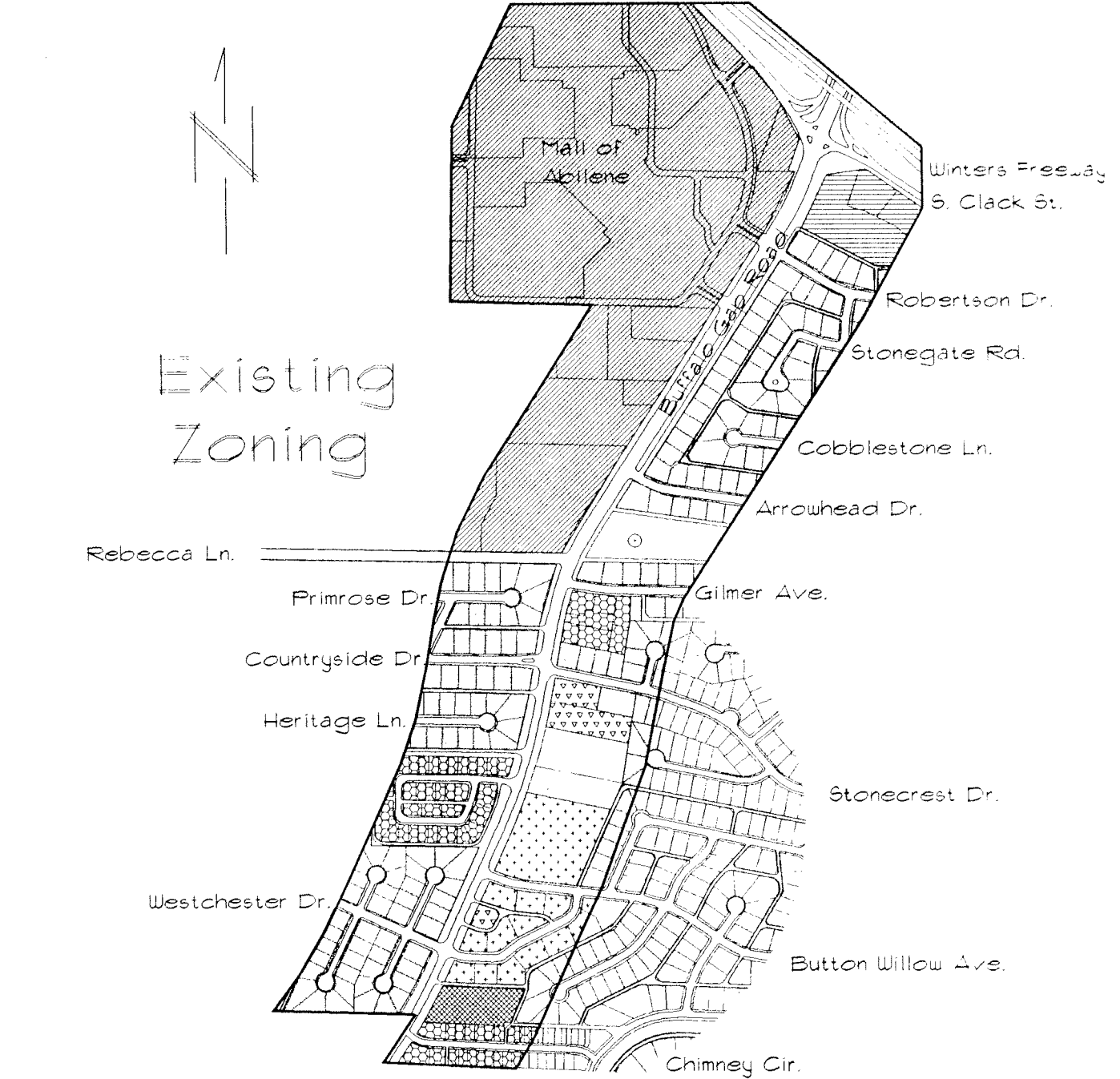
The corridor study area has been broken into three segments for closer analysis due to its length. The total length of the corridor is 3.8 miles. The study area boundaries extend 600 feet on both sides of Buffalo Gap Road. Section I extends from Winters Freeway to Chimney Circle which is approximately one mile south of Winters Freeway. Section II spans from Chimney Circle to just south of Antilley Road. Section III extends from this point to the city limits. The entire corridor comprises 1,137 acres of land. Some of this land, especially in Section III, includes large vacant lots which extend beyond the boundaries of the study area. For the purpose of calculating land use and zoning areas, the entire acreage of these lots were included since single unified developments may utilize the entire lots.

The corridor study has been prepared through analysis of past trends, traditional land use and planning principles, relevant documents prepared by the City of Abilene, survey responses from the public, and characteristics which are unique to the corridor. The study identifies general goals, objectives, and policy recommendations for the corridor, as well as land use recommendations for all of the vacant land. Some design guidelines are provided for future signage, access and parking, building architecture, orientation, and landscaping. The land use recommendations will assist Staff, the Planning Commission, City Council, and area residents when considering rezoning requests.

Section I

Existing Land Use

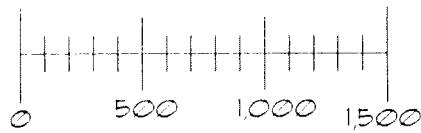




Existing Zoning

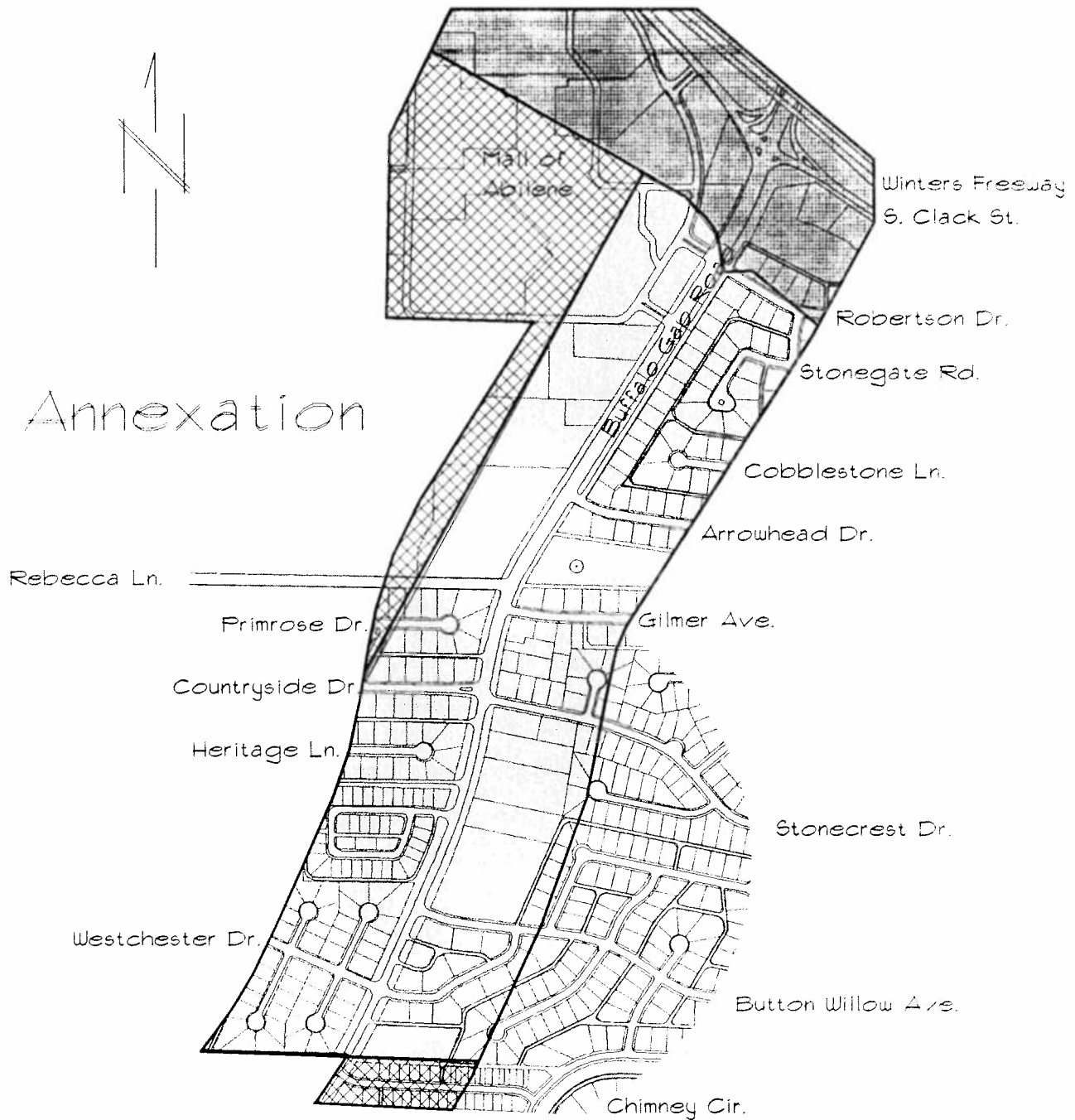
Legend

Scale (feet)



	Limited Commercial		Multi-Family Residential
	Shopping Center		Office
	General Commercial		Planned Dev. District
	Single Family Residential		Agricultural, Open Space

Annexation



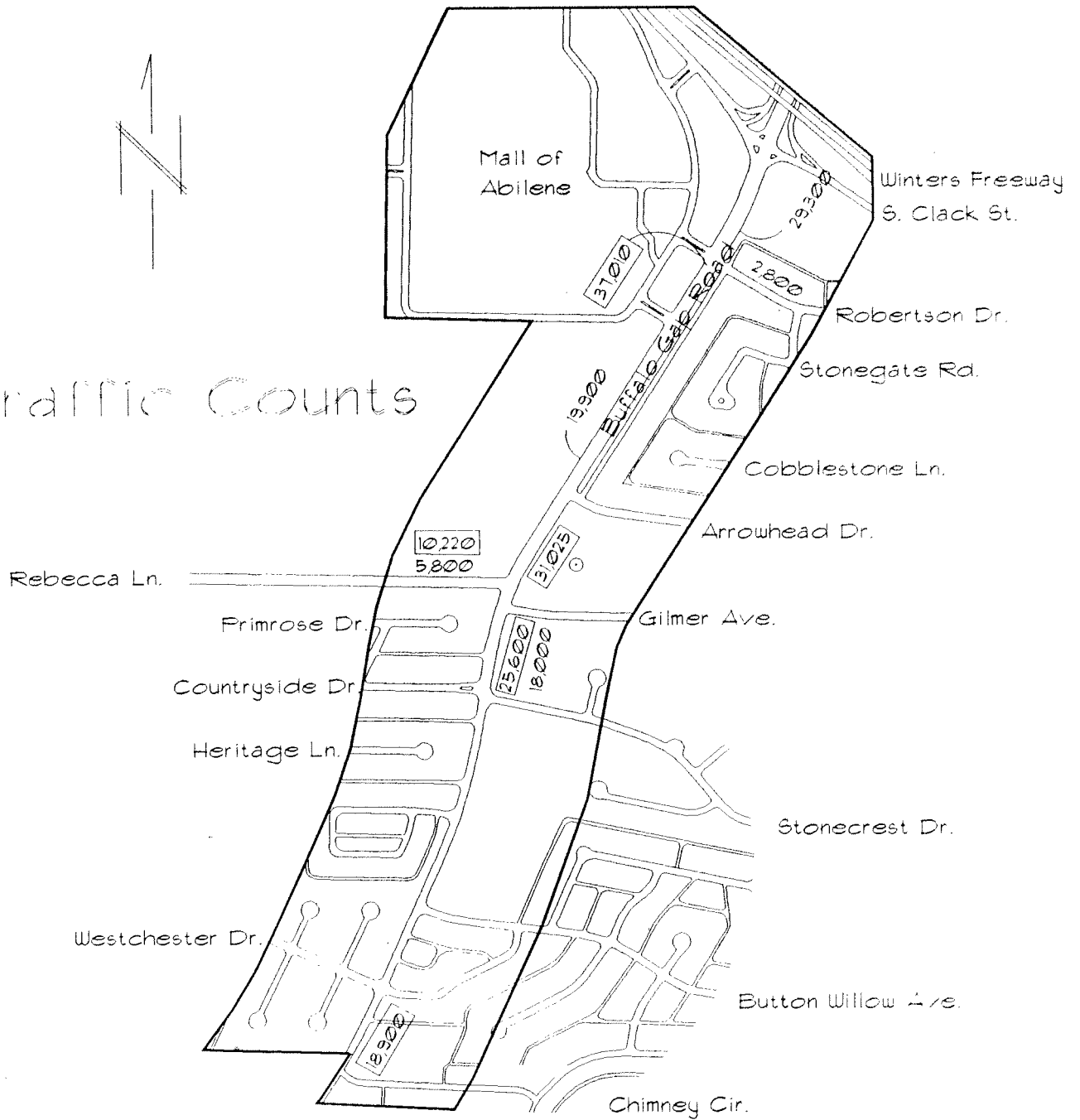
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Traffic Counts

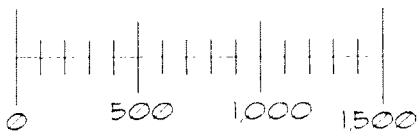


Legend

XXX 1985-1989 Traffic Counts

XXX 1989-1993 Traffic Counts

Scale (feet)



Section II

SECTION II

Description of the Study Area

Section II of the Buffalo Gap Corridor is bounded by Chimney Circle on the north, Champions Drive on the south, and extends 600 feet on both sides of the centerline of Buffalo Gap Road. Section II of the Buffalo Gap Corridor is 1 mile in length. The total area of this section encompasses 303 acres.

Land Use Analysis

Developed areas in Section II of the Buffalo Gap Road Corridor include three different land use classifications. The largest portion of land in Section II includes single family residential uses which account for almost 60 percent of the land. Vacant land encompasses approximately 25 percent of the total land area, most of which is in large tracts at the north end of the section. Public/semi-public uses and commercial uses make up the remainder of developed land. No multi-family uses exist in this area. The large vacant parcels could be subdivided as smaller lots or held for development at a later date.

Table 4: Land Use Analysis

	Acreage	Percent
Commercial	21.13	6.98%
Multi-Family Residential	0.80	0.26%
Public/Semi-Public	31.78	10.50%
Single Family Residential	173.85	57.45%
Vacant	74.68	24.68%
<i>Total</i>	<i>302.60</i>	<i>100.00%</i>

Zoning Analysis

Due to the high percentage of residential property throughout Section II, there is little variation between the established land uses and the existing zoning. The greatest percentage of property is RS, Residential Single Family property at almost 65 percent of the section. The second greatest percentage of land is zoned AO, Agricultural Open Space, and SC, Shopping Center followed by LC, Limited Commercial. The PDD, Planned Development District, has approximately seven percent of the area, which encompasses The Fairways Subdivision. Therefore, most of the PDD land in Section II can be considered equivalent to single family residential property. The remaining zoning districts in the section are O, Office and RM, Residential Multi-Family.

Over the past five years there was only one rezoning case approved in Section II. In January of 1993, the City Council approved the rezoning of a 2.43 acre tract of land located at 5309 Buffalo Gap

Table 5: Zoning Analysis

		Acreage	Percent
AO	Agricultural Open Space District	33.92	11.21%
GC	General Commercial District	0.00	0.00%
LC	Limited Commercial District	18.18	6.00%
SC	Shopping Center District	23.34	7.71%
O	Office District	5.77	1.90%
PDD	Planned Development District	20.42	6.75%
RM	Multi-Family Residential District	3.16	1.04%
RS	Single Family Residential District	197.81	65.37%
<i>Total</i>		<i>302.60</i>	<i>100.00%</i>

Road, from AO, Agricultural Open Space to LC, Limited Commercial. Staff recommended approval of the rezoning. The land was developed as a photography studio.

Annexation History

The entire area of Section II was annexed by the City of Abilene in 1963. Prior to annexation, a great percentage of the land was already established residential property or agricultural land. The Wylie Elementary School and the majority of the churches were also previously established. The Wylie Independent School District was started in the spring of 1902. The two acres of land for the Wylie Elementary School were originally donated by Mrs. M. V. Wylie in 1902, with the understanding that the school and the church carry the name of Wylie. Prior to this, the school was known as Sambo which reflected the name of the United States post office servicing the area at the time.

Traffic and Circulation

The speed limit on this section of Buffalo Gap Road is 45 miles per hour for most of the area. In the south end of Section II there is a school speed zone for Wylie Elementary School. The school speed zone is 35 miles per hour, from 7:30 through 8:30 A.M. and 2:45 through 3:45 P.M. on school days. The school zone is identified by both signs and flashing warning lights. At the intersection of Antilley Road and Buffalo Gap Road there is a traffic signal with pedestrian crosswalk to serve Wylie Elementary School students.

Section II is marked by medium to high volumes of traffic. During normal morning rush hours, there is not nearly as much traffic heading south into Section II as traffic heading north into Section I. In Section II, curb cuts are more prevalent than in Section I due to the greater degree of residential property, the number of uses fronting Buffalo Gap Road, and the number of commercial properties.

There is one traffic signal located in Section II of the Buffalo Gap Road Corridor. The signal is located at the intersection of Buffalo Gap Road and Antilley Road. This intersection has Wylie Elementary School on the northeast corner and Wylie United Methodist Church on the northwest corner. All other streets leading onto Buffalo Gap Road have a stop sign which controls the traffic flow on the side streets without stopping the traffic on the main arterial. However, funding has been approved for a traffic signal at the intersection of Buffalo Gap Road and Chimney Rock Road. It is planned for installation in 1995.

Table 6: Traffic Analysis

Location	Pre-1985	1985-1989	1989-1993
Buffalo Gap Road (south of Mabray Ln.)	9,000	12,400	20,855
Buffalo Gap Road (north of Antilley Rd.)	7,000	8,800	9,720
Woodlake Drive	N/A	1,990	2,280
Antilley Road (west of Buffalo Gap Rd.)	1,000	1,200	1,500
Antilley Road (east of Buffalo Gap Rd.)	2,920	3,200	3,940

The majority of the traffic in Section II, utilizes Buffalo Gap Road as the main route into the central city. Some traffic however, uses Antilley Road to U.S. Highway 83/84 then to Treadaway Boulevard into town. At the current time this is not a heavily traveled route, due to the construction of the U.S. Highway 83/84 and Loop 322 interchange.

Floodplain

There is no property in Section II of the corridor located within the floodplain. All of the property in Section II is located in Zone C, which, as designated by the FEMA maps, indicates an area of minimal flooding.

Aesthetics

Section II serves as a transition zone from Section I to Section III. The southern edge is primarily undeveloped and the preponderance of large lots provides a partially rural setting. Many of these lots have small older houses which were in existence prior to the City annexing the area in 1963. The Fairways Subdivision, which is located adjacent to Buffalo Gap Road, is considered to be one of the premier subdivisions in Abilene.

Strengths and Constraints

Strengths

The minimal number of traffic signals in the area allows for better vehicular movement, especially during non-rush hour times.

A fire station is located at the center of Section II.

The number of commercial properties are limited in Section II of the corridor.

Five well-maintained churches in the area have a stabilizing effect on existing development.

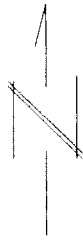
Constraints

The majority of vacant land is found in large tracts which could potentially be developed for large projects, thus increasing the traffic density.

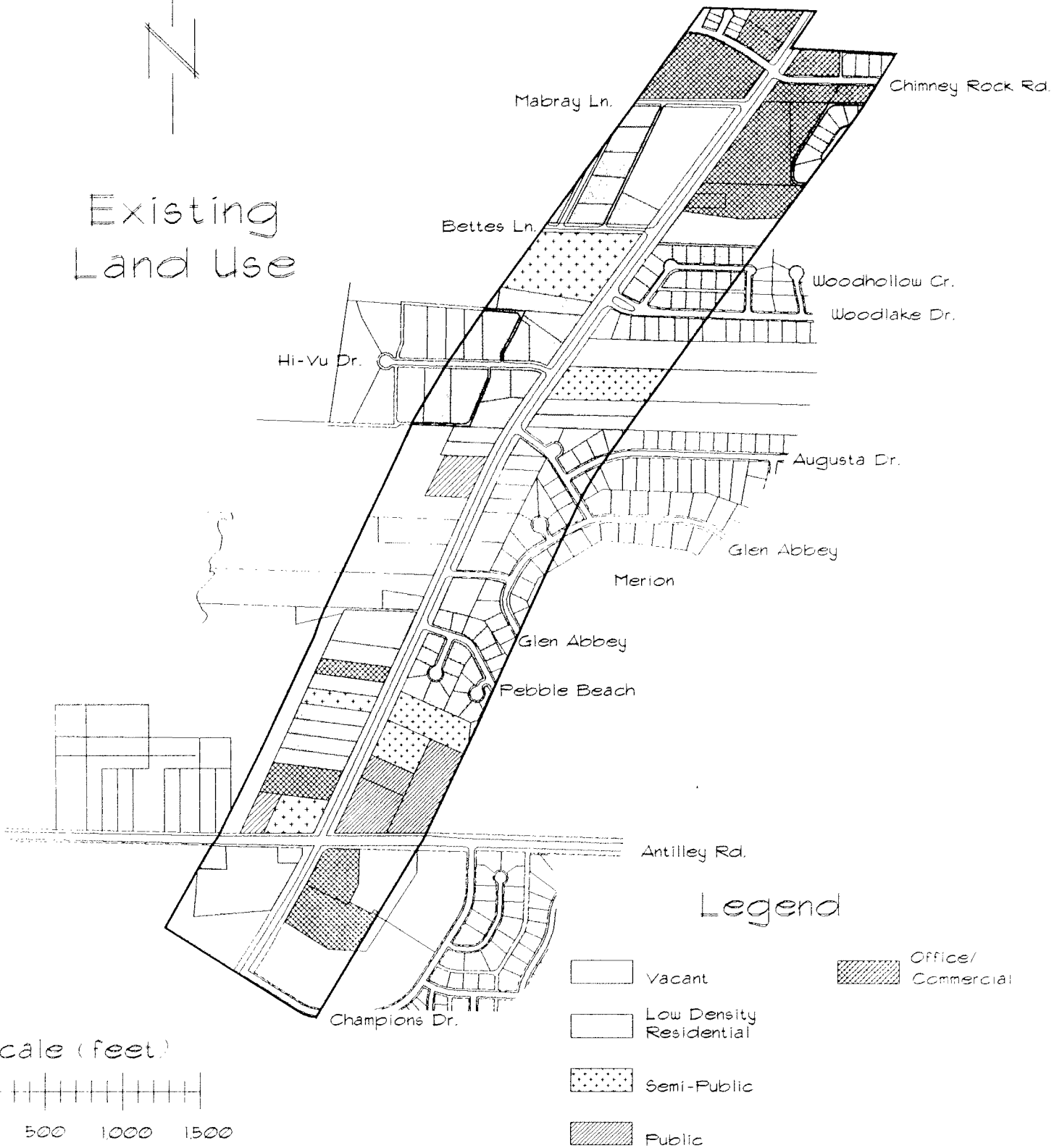
The lack of sidewalks means that pedestrian movement is difficult and potentially unsafe throughout the corridor.

Any more intense development could increase traffic and may result in additional traffic signals which will impede vehicular movement on Buffalo Gap Road.

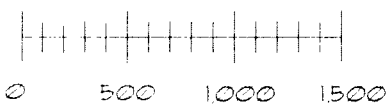
Some of the residential properties have direct access from Buffalo Gap Road which interferes with the major traffic flow.



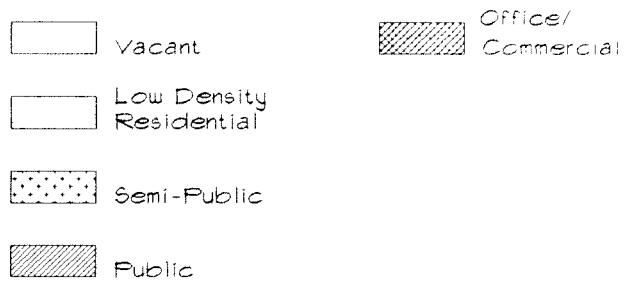
Existing Land Use

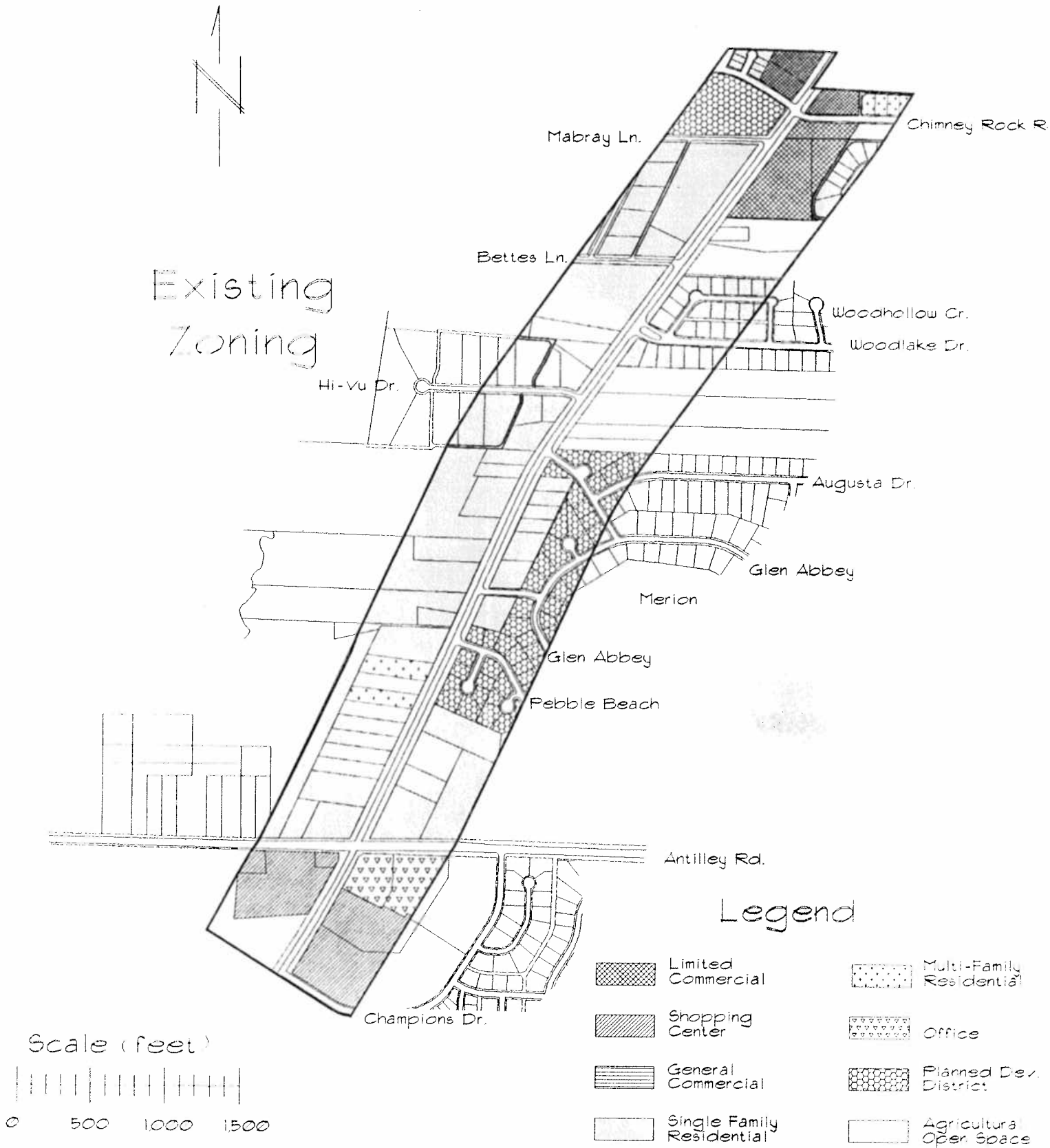


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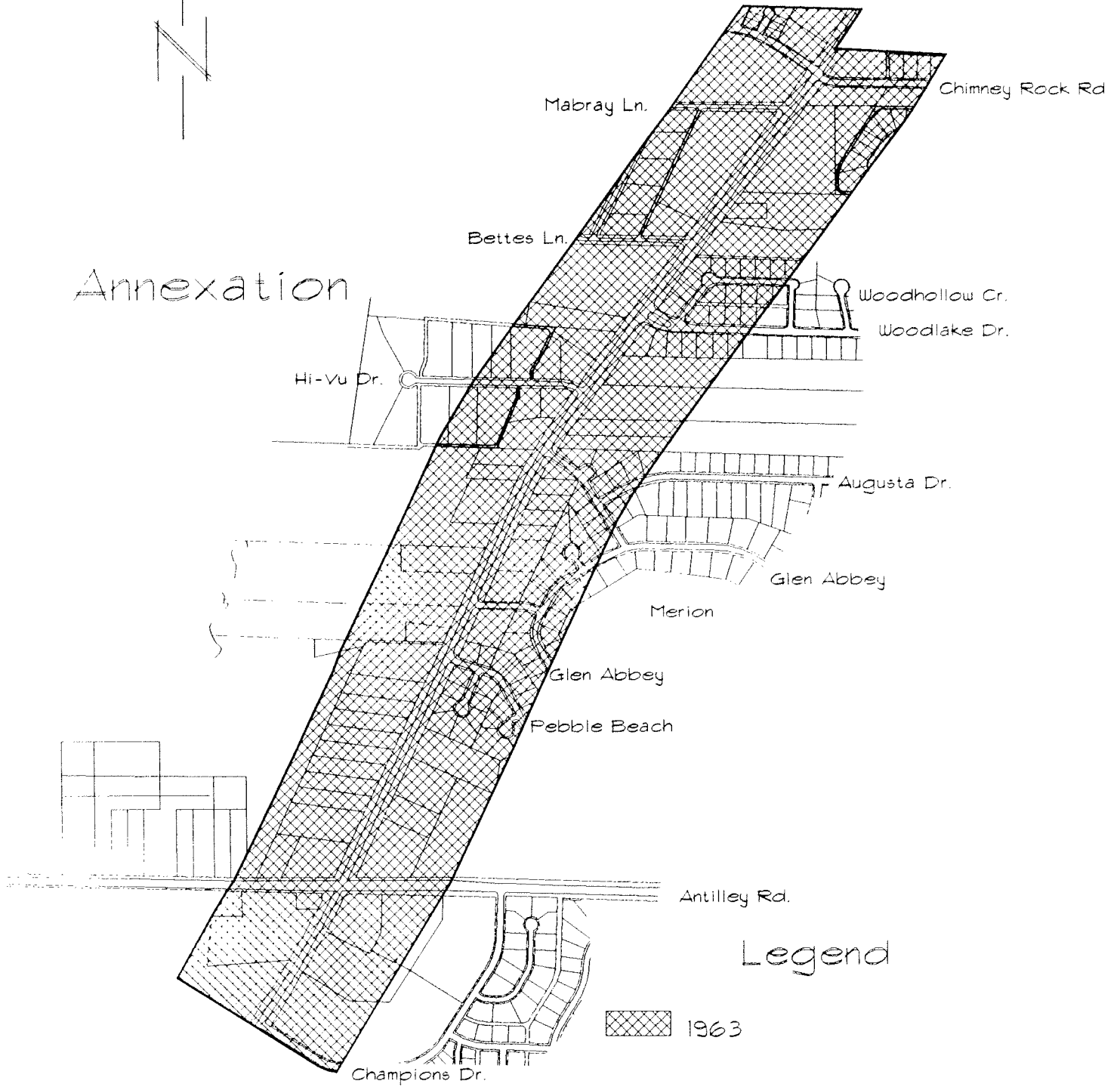
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Annexation

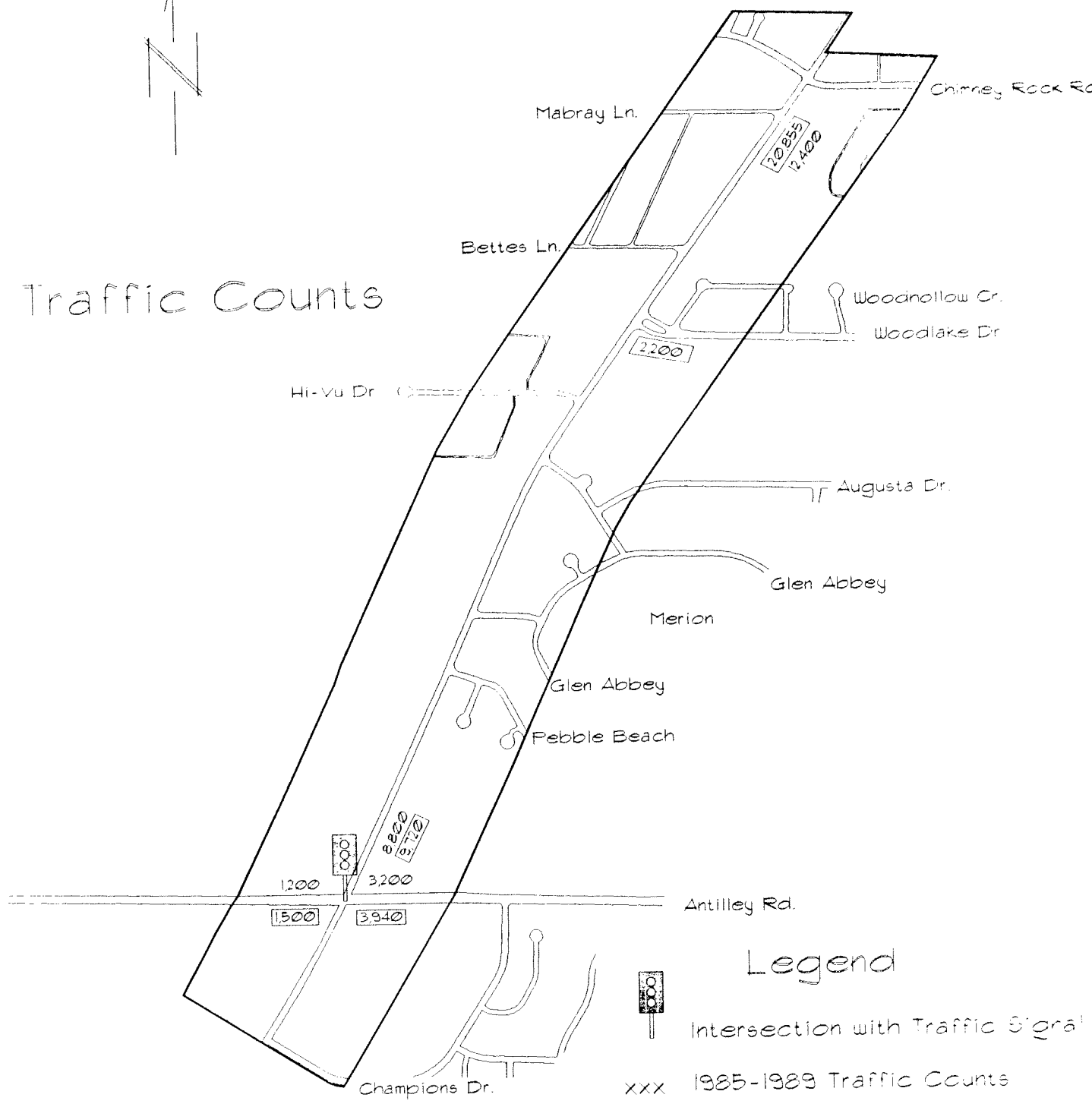
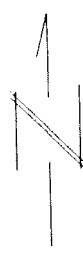


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Traffic Counts



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Intersection with Traffic Signal

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xxx 1989-1993 Traffic Counts

Scale (feet)



Section III

SECTION III

Description of the Study Area

Section III of the Buffalo Gap Road Corridor study is defined by Champions Drive on the north and the city limits on the south. Section III is 1.7 miles in length. The corridor extends 600 feet on both sides of the Buffalo Gap Road centerline.

There are approximately 667 acres of land in Section III. The total area of Section III accounts for 58.8 percent of the land within the entire corridor. The section includes several large tracts of land which are not completely within the boundaries of the study. Even though only a portion of these tracts are located in the study area boundary, the entire acreage was added into the total because these tracts may be developed or sold as whole tracts.

Land Use Analysis

Section III of the corridor has five different land use classifications. The greatest percentage of land in Section III is vacant. This vacant land accounts for a significant portion of the total area in Section III. Public/semi-public uses account for the greatest percentage of developed land. Single family residential, commercial, and multi-family residential property account for the remainder of the total area respectively.

Table 7: Land Use Analysis

	Acreage	Percent
Commercial	25.54	3.83%
Multi-Family Residential	0.72	0.10%
Public/Semi-Public	98.80	14.81%
Single Family Residential	38.04	5.70%
Vacant	504.06	75.56%
<i>Total</i>	<i>667.16</i>	<i>100.00%</i>

Zoning Analysis

Reflecting the high percentage of vacant land in the section, AO, Agricultural Open Space encompasses by far the greatest percentage of land in Section III at over 60 percent. Second, the PDD, Planned Development District constitutes approximately a quarter of the land. A majority of the PDD includes the Mesa Springs Retirement Home which is owned by Hendrick Medical Center. RS, Residential Single Family, and SC, Shopping Center follow with under 10 percent of the land. The remaining zoning designations are relatively insignificant throughout the section. GC, General Commercial, RM, Residential Multi-Family, O, Office district, and LC, Limited Commercial round out Section III.

In November of 1992, the City Council approved the rezoning of a 7.69 acre tract of land from AO to PDD and a 72.46 acre tract of land from AO to Residential Single Fam-

Table 8: Zoning Analysis

		Acreage	Percent
AO	Agricultural Open Space District	435.14	65.22%
GC	General Commercial District	13.05	1.96%
LC	Limited Commercial District	0.00	0.00%
SC	Shopping Center District	2.28	0.34%
O	Office District	0.00	0.00%
PDD	Planned Development District	179.70	26.94%
RM	Multi-Family Residential District	9.33	1.40%
RS	Single Family Residential District	27.65	4.14%
<i>Total</i>		<i>667.16</i>	<i>100.00%</i>

ily, RS-8. The rezoning request was recommended for approval by staff.

Annexation History

Approximately one-third of Section III of the Buffalo Gap Road Corridor Study was annexed by the City of Abilene in 1963. This area extends south of Champions Drive to Catclaw Creek which is just north of Forrest Hill Road. The remaining portion of Section III was annexed by the City in 1980. The land annexed in 1980 constitutes the land which now defines the southern edge of the city along the corridor.

Traffic and Circulation

The speed limit in Section III ranges from 50 mph near Champions Drive to 55 mph along the south half of the section. Traffic in Section III of the corridor is much less inhibited than in Section I. Due to the almost rural nature of Section III, there is much less traffic flow.

The vast majority of motorists in Section III use Buffalo Gap Road to enter the central portion of the city. Due to the limited number of arterials in this portion of the city, there are limited alternatives for motorists in Section III. However, an increase in traffic over the past few years on Treadaway Boulevard and U.S. Highway 83-84 possibly indicates that alternate routes are used by a few area residents.

Table 9: Traffic Analysis

Location	Pre-1985	1985-1989	1989-1993
Buffalo Gap Road (south of Antilley Rd.)	6,000	6,600	N/A
Buffalo Gap Road (north of Forest Hill Rd.)	5,000	6,600	N/A
Buffalo Gap Road (north of F.M. 707)	4,000	4,000	4,600
Buffalo Gap Road (south of F.M. 707)	2,500	2,700	N/A

Floodplain

Section III of the study is the only section with land in the flood plain. The land is approximately 300 feet north of Forrest Hill Road. It marks the southern edge of the 100 year flood zone. The northern boundary is about 800 feet south of Champions Drive. The base elevation near the north end is 1,802 feet above sea level. Outlining the northern edge of the 100 year flood zone is a narrow band of the 500 year flood zone.

Aesthetics

Section III is much more rural in character than the other two sections. The Mesquite Forest Subdivision has several nice homes. However, the subdivision is back a few hundred feet from the corridor, reducing any significant aesthetic impact on Buffalo Gap Road, especially as the vacant land along the corridor is developed.

With the rural atmosphere of Section III, there is a preponderance of mesquite trees in many of the large vacant fields as well as in the residential areas. These trees are able to withstand the relatively dry climate, and thrive in areas such as this portion of Buffalo Gap Road.

Strengths and Constraints

Strengths

Mesa Springs Retirement Village provides an attractive anchor for Section III.

The section has access to a scenic view of the hills south of Abilene especially in the south end.

The intersection of Buffalo Gap Road and Highway 707 serves as an entry point for travelers entering from the south of Abilene.

Historic Buffalo Gap is located approximately 5 miles south of the city limits.

Abilene State Park is located approximately 12 miles south of the city limits.

The large vacant tracts of land provide an opportunity for quality development throughout much of Section III.

Due to the rural nature of Section III, and the existing capacity of traffic on Buffalo Gap Road, congestion is currently not a concern.

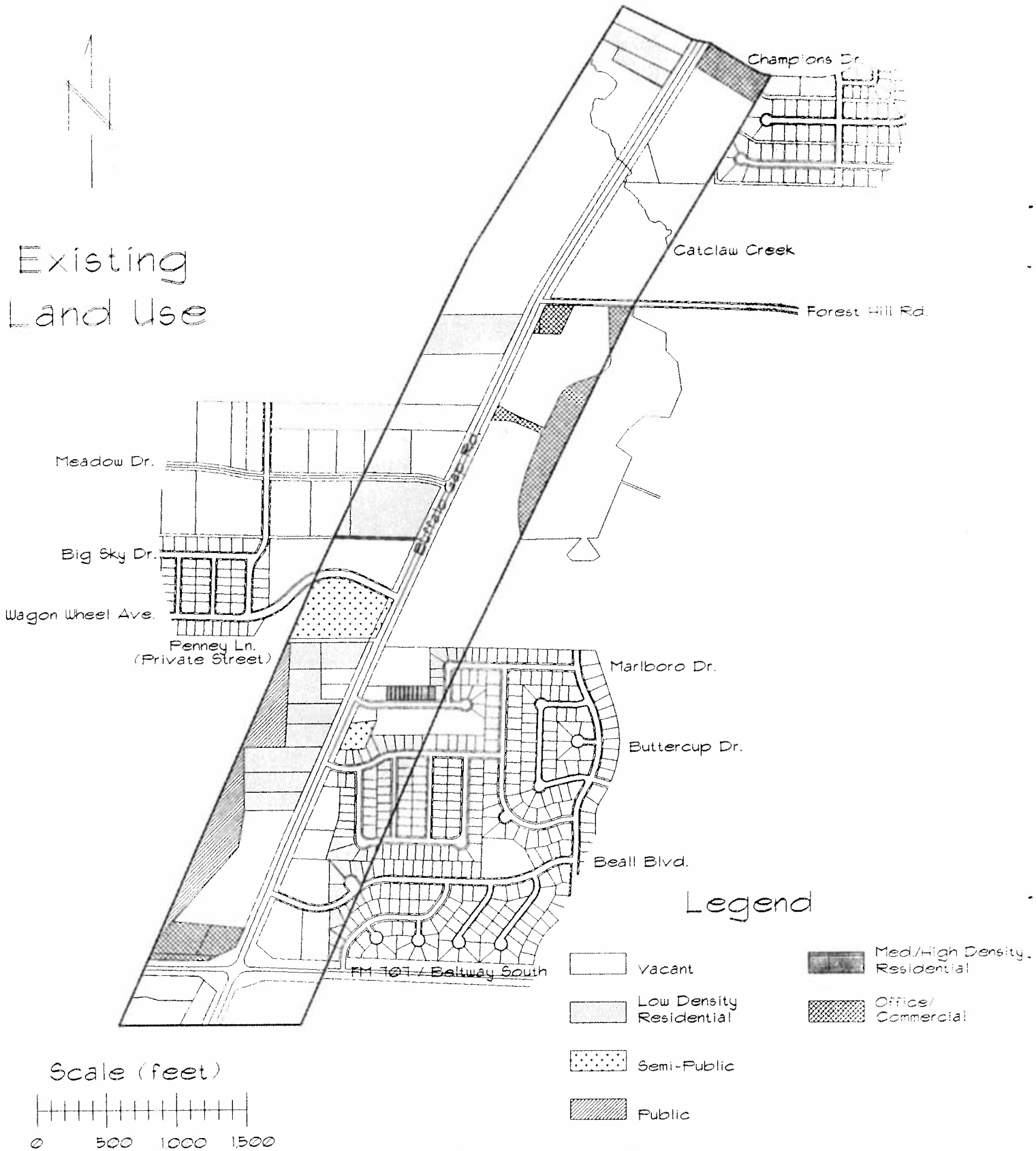
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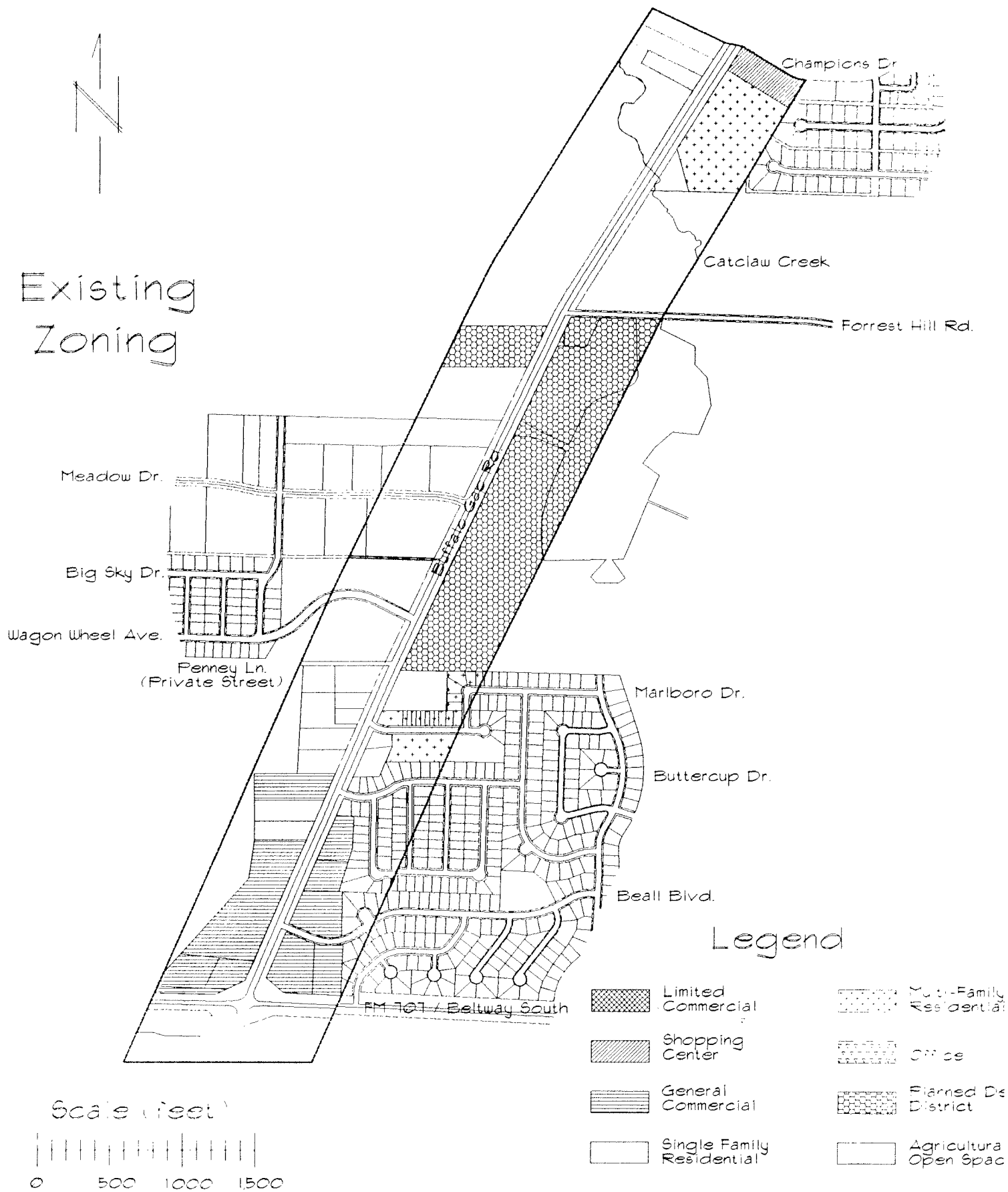
Due to the large vacant fields, there are areas of debris along the right-of-way.

The large vacant tracts of land zoned AO, Agricultural Open Space, increase the potential for development of undesirable land uses without any land use guidance.

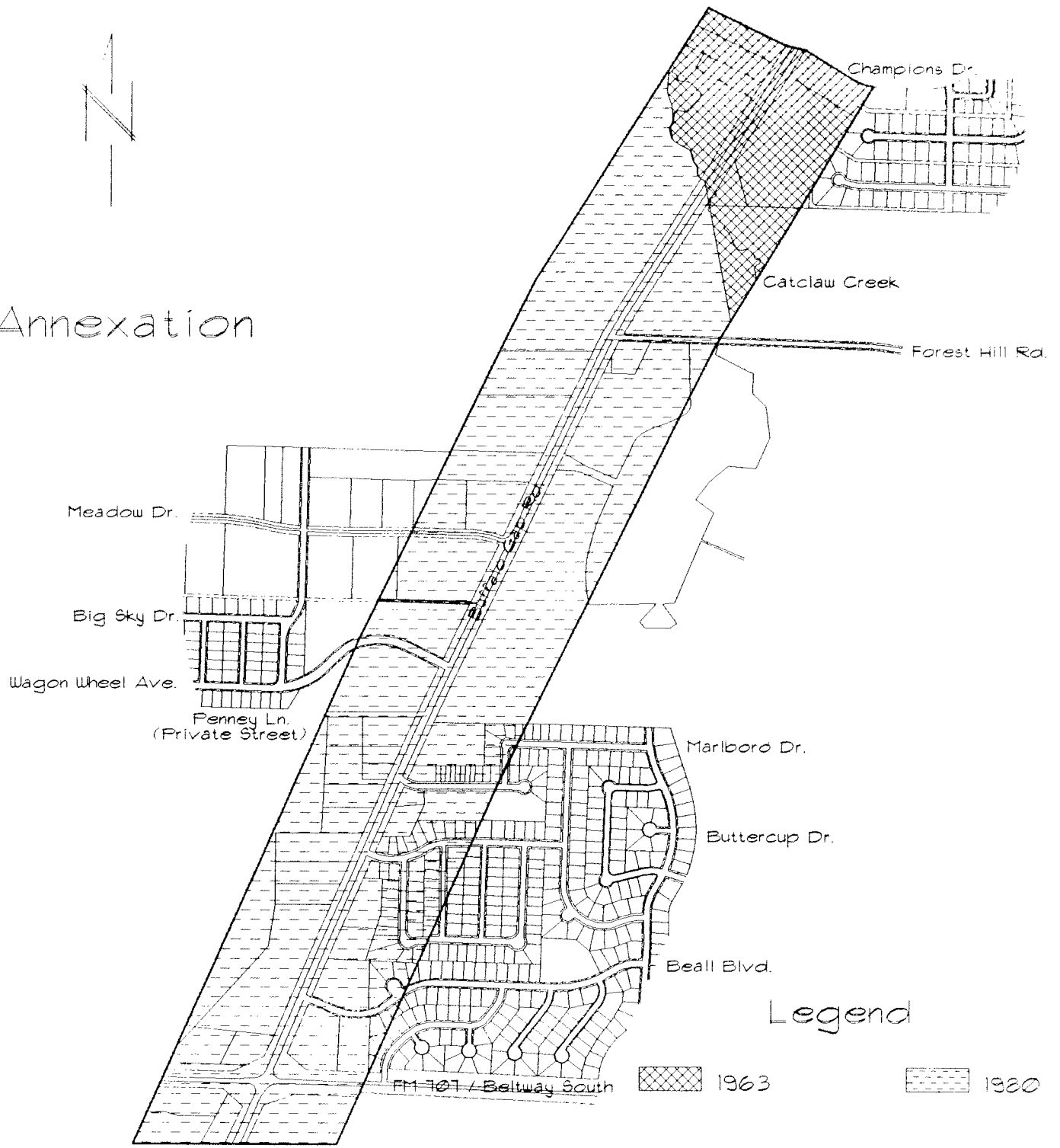
Several of the vacant tracts are not large enough for PDD zoning and are located along mid-blocks. These tracts also have minimal potential to develop as single family residential uses since they have direct access off Buffalo Gap Road.

As the two large tracts in the southwest portion of Section III develop, demands on infrastructure are increased.



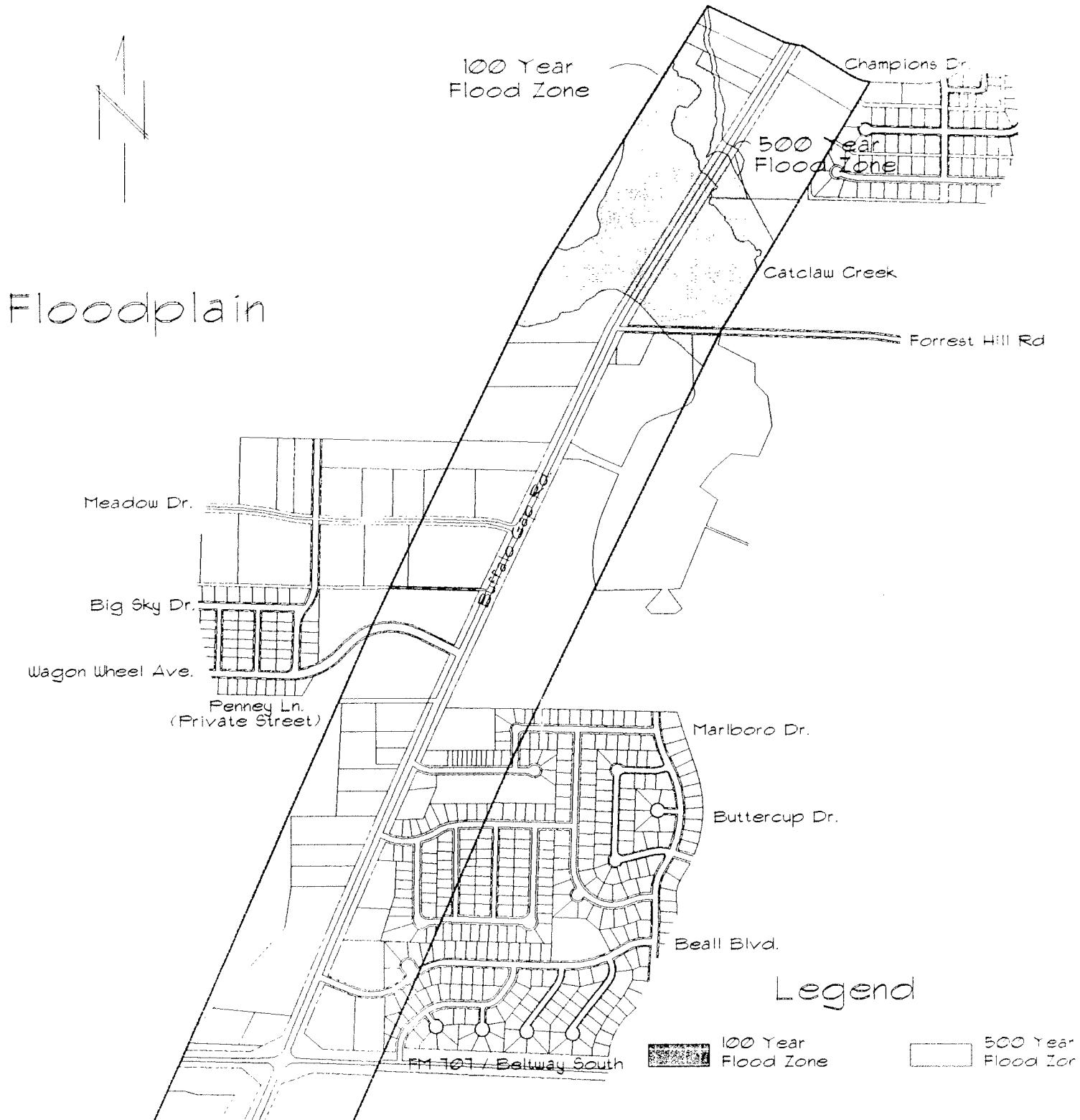


Annexation

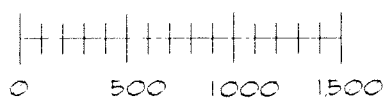


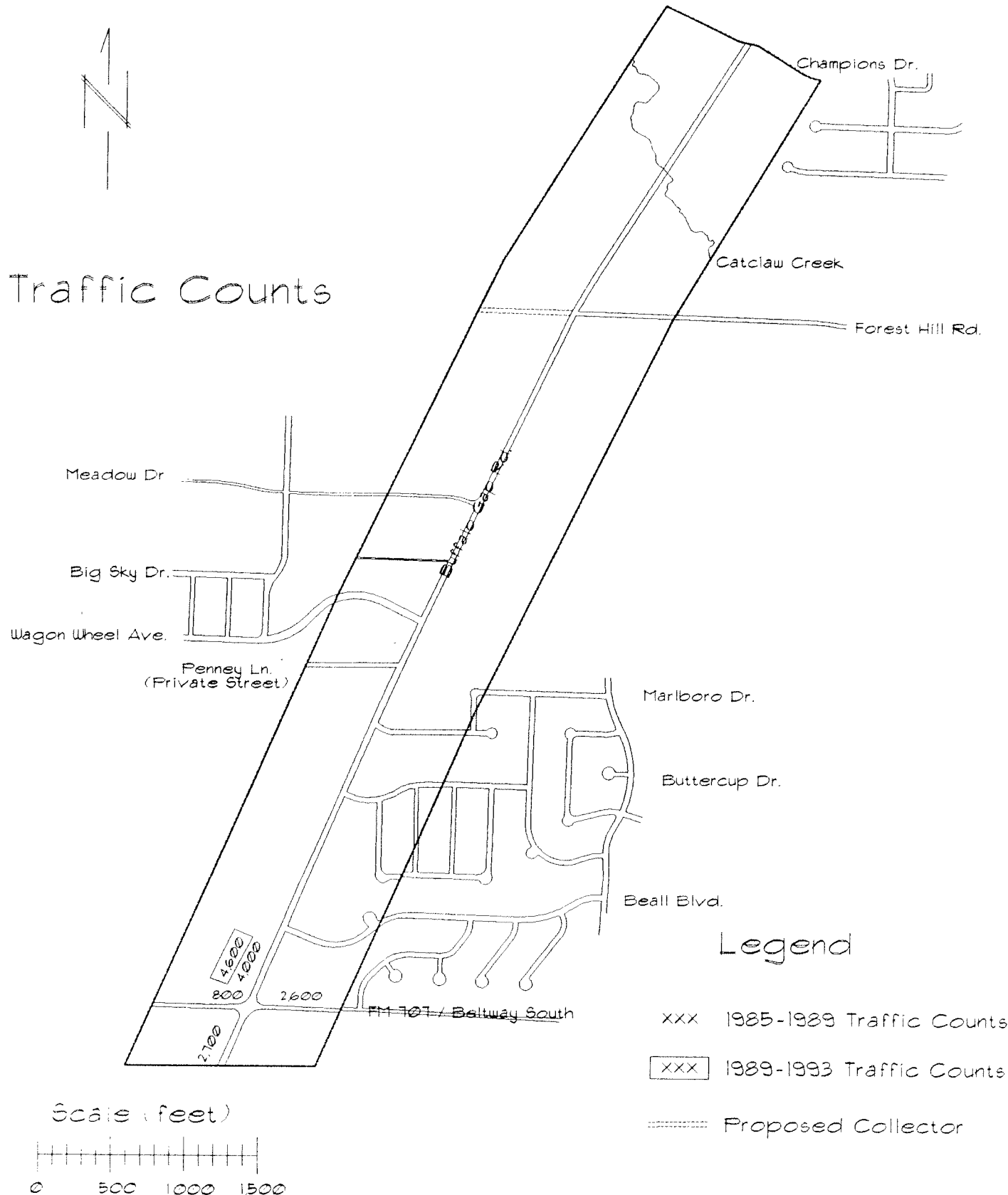
Scale (feet)





Scale (feet)





Recommendations

RECOMMENDATIONS

The primary purpose of this study is to provide recommended land uses for vacant tracts that remain within the corridor. Without any planning or land use guidance, the potential remains that some of the vacant parcels may develop with inappropriate and non-compatible land uses. Planning for future growth within the corridor should result in efficient land use patterns that have the least negative impact on traffic and existing surrounding land uses. In addition, land use guidance should encourage the potential use of the corridor as a scenic **visual pathway** with a positive identity for not only nearby residents but for the city as a whole.

Goals, Objectives and Policies

In order to encourage quality development and growth within the remaining undeveloped areas of the Buffalo Gap Road Corridor, Planning Staff has developed some recommended goals, objectives and policies. Development of this section was based on an overriding philosophy of encouraging quality growth within the corridor.

GOAL #1

TO PROMOTE QUALITY GROWTH IN THE GENERAL AREA BY ESTABLISHING EFFICIENT AND COMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT ALONG BUFFALO GAP ROAD.

Objective #1A:

Ensure that development throughout the corridor is accomplished in an appropriate manner.

Policies

1A(1).

Encourage any future retail/commercial zoning only at major intersections, especially where existing commercial activities are already present.

1A(2).

Encourage low density residential or office zoning along the Buffalo Gap Road frontage at mid-block locations. This should minimize development of commercial uses adjacent to residential uses.

1A(3).

Ensure high quality development of vacant land by establishing overlay zoning for the entire corridor which requires special development standards of setbacks, signage, screening, landscaping, parking and access, etc...

Objective #1B:

Maintain Buffalo Gap Road as an attractive entrance into the city of Abilene.

Policies***1B(1).***

Establish required landscaping standards for new developments along Buffalo Gap Road through the application of corridor overlay zoning.

1B(2).

Encourage quality urban design features and standards of aesthetics such as attractive low level signage, on-site landscaping, and the utilization of natural features (drainage ways, floodways) as enhancements.

GOAL #2

TO PROMOTE DEVELOPMENT WHICH HAS THE LEAST IMPACT ON TRAVEL ALONG BUFFALO GAP ROAD AND MINIMIZES ANY IMPACT ON TRAFFIC PATTERNS FROM ADJACENT RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

Objective #2A:

Promote traffic flow patterns which will generate the best possible conditions in the corridor. This will be accomplished by minimizing the amount of possible traffic conflicts in areas which are not fully developed.

POLICIES***2A(1).***

Require driveway spacing standards through the application of corridor overlay zoning.

2A(2).

Prevent future residential access onto Buffalo Gap Road through the application of corridor overlay zoning.

2A(3).

Establish development standards in a corridor overlay zoning district which ensures appropriate traffic volumes for all future developments.

Land Use Recommendations for Vacant Land

Land Use Recommendations for Vacant Land

Land use recommendations are provided for all of the vacant parcels that exist along the Buffalo Gap Road Corridor, based on the goals, objectives and policies. These recommendations should assist staff, public officials, and the public, at the time zoning and subdivision decisions are made. In some cases, staff has provided a range of land uses that have similar intensities.

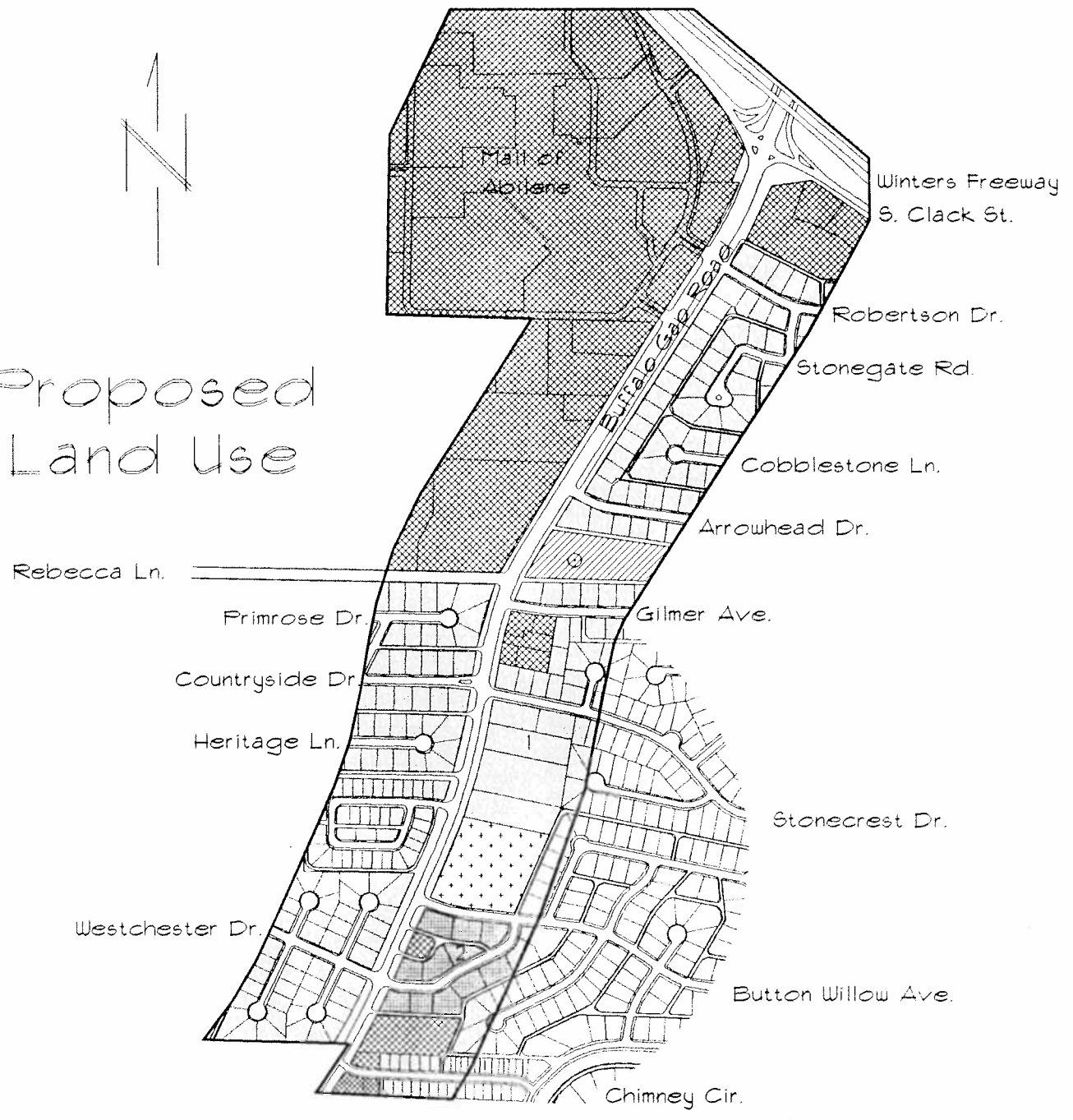
Section I

Since most of the land uses are already developed within Section I, future land uses for vacant parcels have practically been determined. Only two vacant parcels are identified within the area. Low density residential uses have been recommended for a vacant parcel which is surrounded on all sides by existing single family development. At the same time, multi-family uses have been recommended for the vacant parcel which is surrounded by multi family uses.

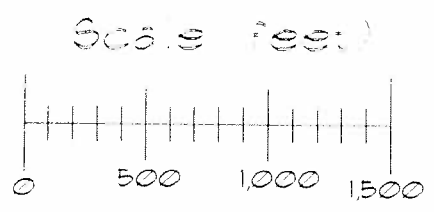
Table 10: Vacant Land Use Recommendations







Vacant Lot Number	Recommended Land Use
1	Low Density Residential
2	Multi-Family Residential

Proposed Land Use



Legend



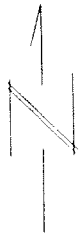
- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  Vacant |  Med./High Density Residential |
|  Low Density Residential |  Office/Commercial |
|  Semi-Public | |
|  Public | |

Section II

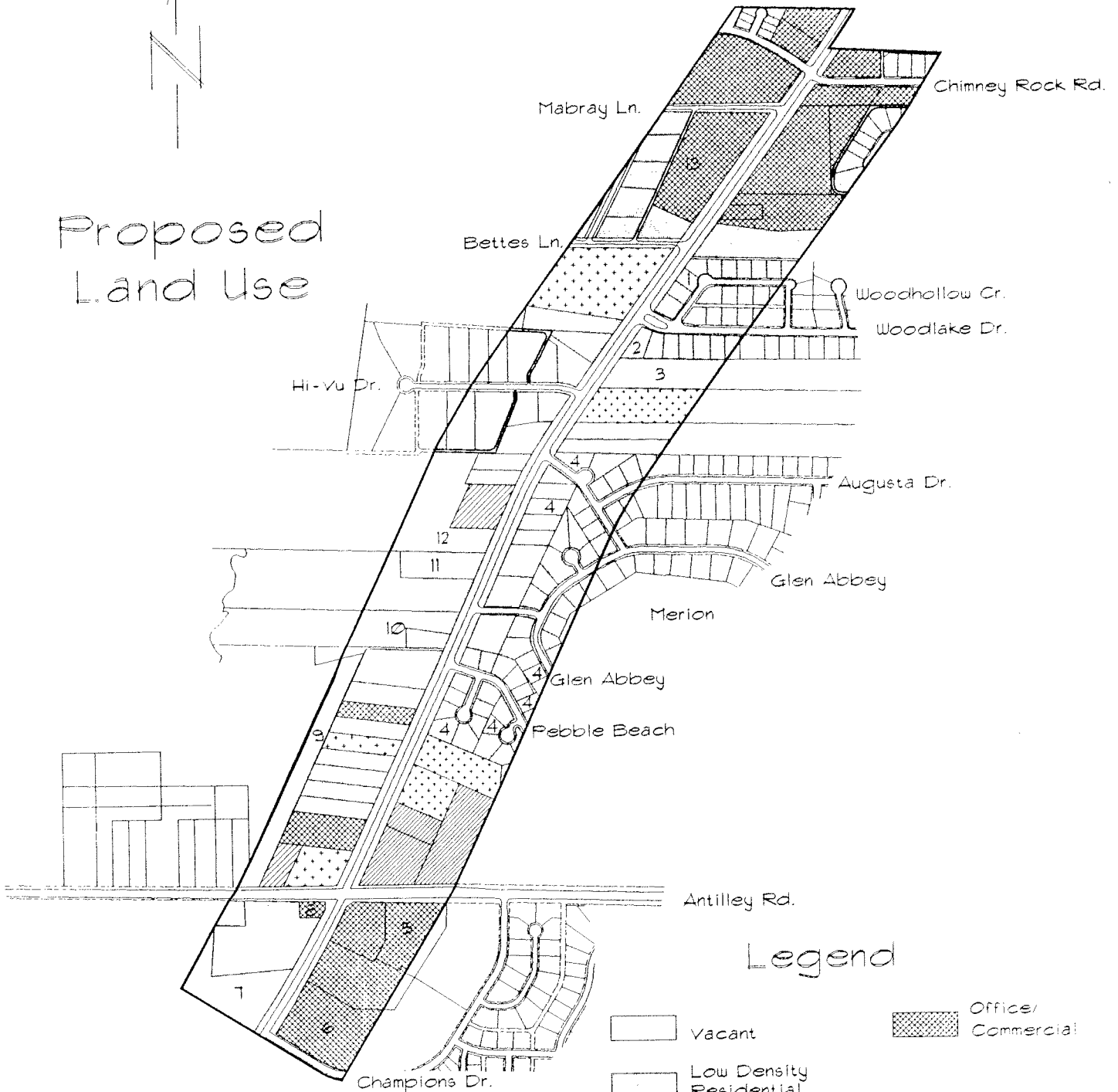
Most of the vacant parcels within Section II are located in areas established with single family residential uses. At the same time, the parcels have potential access from points other than Buffalo Gap Road. Therefore, Staff has recommended that these parcels continue to develop as low density residential. Commercial uses are only recommended within a vacant parcel located just south of an existing retail core at the Chimney Rock intersection. Staff recommends that commercial development concentrate at the intersection and that a transitional area of public/semi-public uses or office uses locate adjacent to the low density residential areas, where possible.

Table 11: Vacant Land Use Recommendations

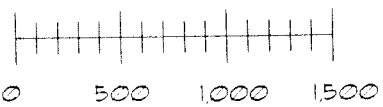
Vacant Lot Number	Recommended Land Use
1	Low Density Residential
2	Low Density Residential
3	Low Density Residential
4	Low Density Residential
5	Commercial
6	Commercial
7	Low Density Residential
8	Commercial
9	Low Density Residential
10	Low Density Residential
11	Low Density Residential
12	Low Density Residential
13	Office or Low Density Residential



Proposed Land Use



Scale (feet)



Section III

Since a large portion of Section III is still undeveloped, most of the land use recommendations will apply to this section. As stated earlier, several of the vacant parcels are located at mid-block locations with direct access from Buffalo Gap Road. These parcels are not particularly suited to planned development zoning due to the fact that they are not large enough to meet the minimum size requirement of two to four acres. At the same time, they are not well suited for single family residential uses since they have no access other than from Buffalo Gap Road. Finally, staff can not recommend typical retail/commercial business because of the effect of creating a strip of commercial properties adjacent to existing single family dwellings. The following arguments have been made against strip commercial zoning by Norman Williams, a professor of Planning Law:

- 1) Ribbon commercial zoning is not an efficient way to promote business. The depth (often 100 feet, sometimes 150 or more) does not provide enough space for modern retailing; and the stretching out of development in a long ribbon makes difficult that comparison shopping which is so important to the success of modern retail development.
- 2) The existence of many curb cuts tends to interrupt traffic flow, and also to result in more accidents.
- 3) In many areas there is not nearly enough need for commercial space to fill up all the space on such highways. The result frequently is a messy pattern, where some commercial development alternatives with vacant lots or run-down residences.
- 4) When such frontage is fully developed for commercial use, it tends to be appallingly messy and ugly, in a different way. Moreover, in this instance (and also in the previous one), such frontage tends to have a blighting influence on residential development nearby and behind.
- 5) Moreover, where there is insufficient demand for commercial space, the policy often results in a substantial waste of land. Along such highways it is not at all uncommon to find large areas where the frontage is vacant or largely vacant, but beyond the ribbon commercial zone, 100 or 150 feet back, there is solid residential development in the residential zone.

Staff has, therefore, recommended that the parcels be developed as either **office or public/semi public** uses. The *City of Abilene Zoning Ordinance* states that the O District regulations “are intended to encourage office development of high character in a generally non commercial environment.” In addition, it states that “the selected business and/or professional offices allowed in an Office District have relatively low traffic generation characteristics, handle no products, and require limited identification by signs or other such devices.”

Other vacant parcels at the mid-block locations are generally recommended for low density residential uses. These parcels have potential access from adjacent land areas that are still undeveloped. Vacant parcels located at intersections where other commercial developments

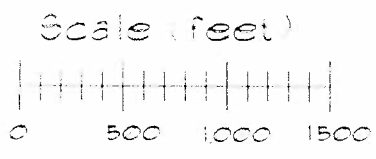
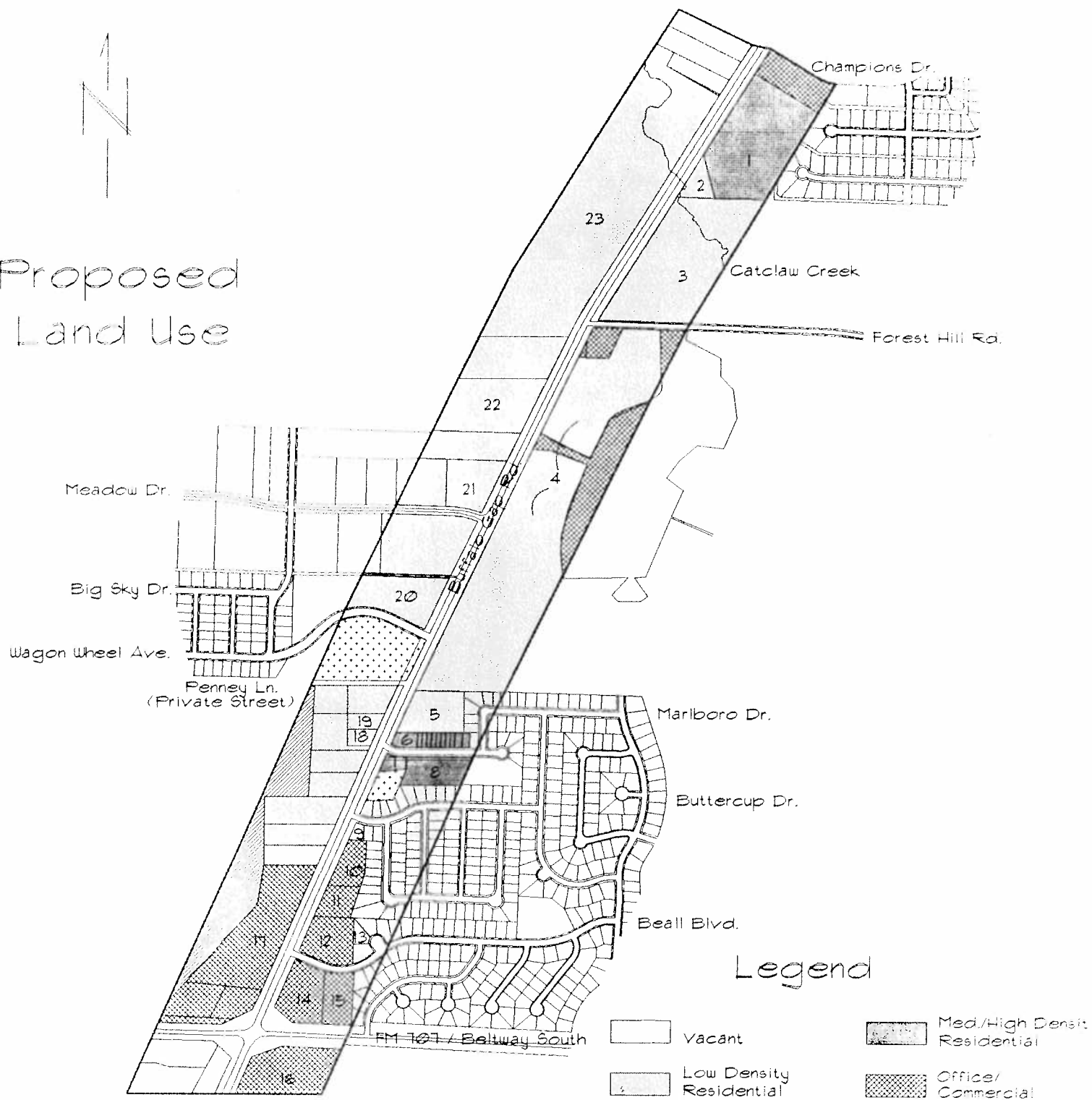
have already been established, are also recommended for commercial uses. At the same time, if the parcels are large enough and are located adjacent to existing low density residential uses, a transition of medium density housing, office or public/semi-public uses have been recommended. Finally, the only multi-family uses that are recommended are indicated along Marlboro Drive, directly across the street from existing multi-family development. It is assumed that since the vacant parcel has access only from Marlboro Drive, that higher density housing on that parcel would be compatible with existing development on the other side of Marlboro Drive.

Table 12: Vacant Land Use Recommendations

Vacant Lot Number	Recommended Land Use
1	Medium Density or Multi-Family Residential
2	Low Density Residential
3	Low Density Residential
4	Low Density Residential
5	Low Density Residential
6	Medium Density or Multi-Family Residential
7	Medium Density or Multi-Family Residential
8	Medium Density or Multi-Family Residential
9	Low Density Residential
10	Office or Public/Semi-Public
11	Office or Public/Semi-Public
12	Office or Public/Semi-Public
13	Low Density Residential
14	Commercial
15	Office, Medium Density Residential or Public/Semi-Public
16	Commercial
17	Office, Medium Density Residential or Public/Semi-Public
18	Low Density Residential
19	Low Density Residential
20	Low Density Residential or Public/Semi-Public
21	Low Density Residential
22	Low Density Residential
23	Low Density Residential



Proposed Land Use



Implementation Guidelines

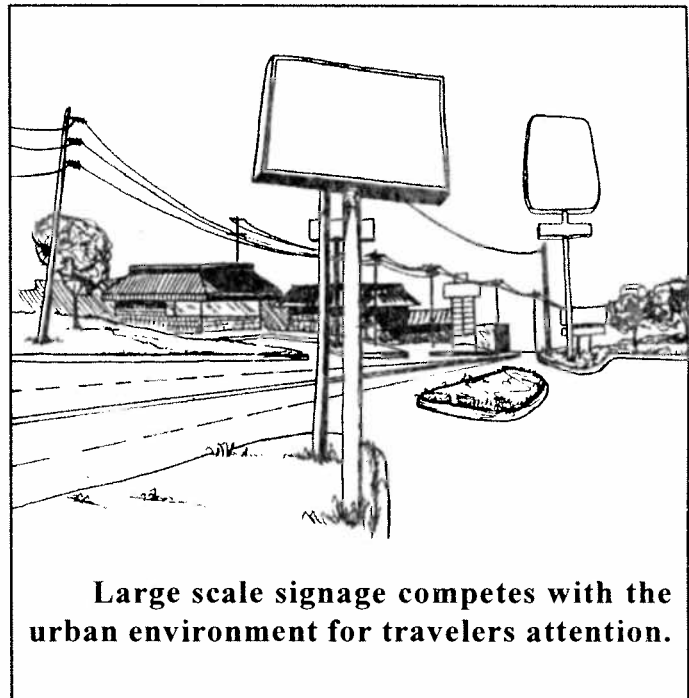
Implementation Guidelines

Design Elements

Attention to quality growth and development standards will ensure that the Buffalo Gap Road Corridor maintains a positive image. In order to assist the developers, neighborhood groups and interested residents, staff has included some design elements that should be considered at the time development occurs. Although most of the elements will relate to development of the vacant land that exists within the corridor, some application may also be appropriate for areas that have already developed. This section will identify guidelines that relate to the four design elements of signage, access and parking, building architecture and orientation, and landscaping.

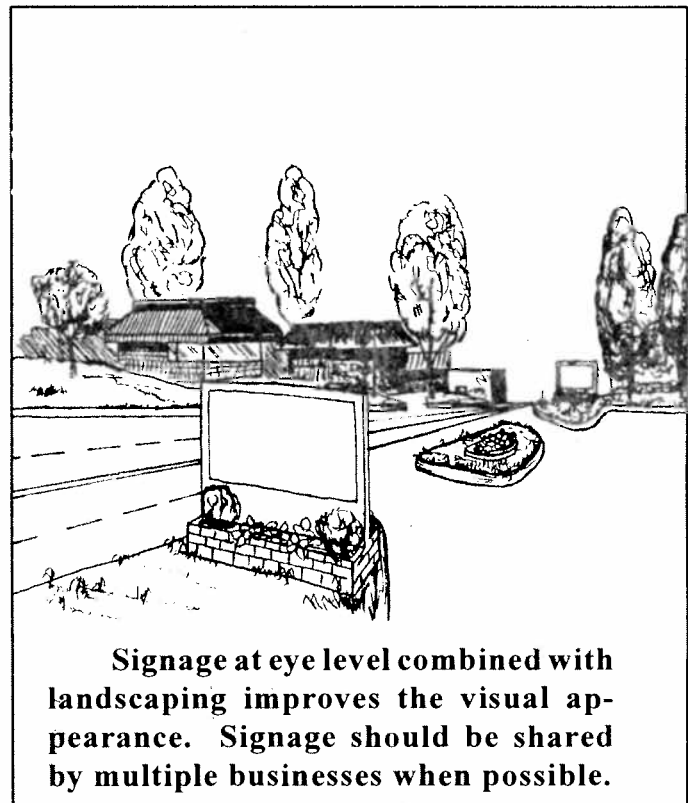
Signage

One of the most significant visual impacts experienced by travelers is the type, character and frequency of signage along the thoroughfares. Often a "hodgepodge" of business and advertising signs add to the urban clutter evoking negative responses, whether internalized or realized. Although much of the northern section of the Buffalo Gap Road Corridor is already developed and signage already established, opportunities still exist for much of the vacant land in the southern portion to secure new signs which are in keeping with an attractive entrance into the city. If future zoning changes are consistent with the recommended land uses in this study, signage along most of the mid-block locations would be limited. Because most of the vacant land between the intersections is recommended for the RS, Single Family or O, Office Zoning, the following standards would apply in those areas (See Table 13).



Large scale signage competes with the urban environment for travelers attention.

Exhibit 1



Signage at eye level combined with landscaping improves the visual appearance. Signage should be shared by multiple businesses when possible.

Exhibit 2

Table 13: Signage Standards for Single Family/ Office Zones

Zoning District	Permitted Permanent Signs	Maximum Area	Maximum Height	Number/ Spacing	Illumination/ Motion Permitted	Front Setback Required
RS	1. Yard Sign (Political/ Real Estate)	6 sq. ft.		1 Per Premises	No	10 Feet from curb or pavement edge, provided it does not encroach into R.O.W.
	2. Home Occupation Identification	1 Sq. Ft. (Wall Sign Only)		1 Per Premises	No	
O	1. Business/ Identification	36 Sq. Ft.	12 Feet	1 Per Business	Yes	10 Feet from property line
	2. Instructional (Private)	8 Sq. Ft.	10 Feet	As Needed	Yes	

Off-site advertising signs of 700 square feet or business/identification signs of 300 square feet permitted in other districts would not be permitted within the vacant land at the mid-block locations of the corridor. It is noted that institutional signs for churches and other non-profit organizations are permitted in the RS District. The institutional signs are permitted up to 80 square feet in area, up to 25 feet in height, and only one per street front. Institutional wall signs permitted in the RS District can not exceed one per street frontage and be no more than 100 square feet in area.

Exhibit 1 illustrates the visual effect of a concentration of large scale non-uniform commercial signage. The signs clutter the visual environment especially when they are combined with utility lines, utility poles, traffic signs, stop lights, etc. **Exhibit 2** identifies the preferred approach to signage within the corridor. Low-scale signs at eye level are more in keeping with an attractive entrance into the city and are more to scale with the surrounding residential subdivisions.

Because land has developed and will continue to develop as predominately single family residential within and adjacent to the Buffalo Gap Road corridor, signs which identify the neighborhood entrances are important as a means of creating an orientation for travelers and a "sense of place" for residents. **Exhibits 3&4** illustrate some of the existing signs that have been constructed in the corridor. Future subdivisions which develop should duplicate these

types of efforts. Other means to accommodate neighborhood entrances, other than signage, include: landscaped medians or traffic islands, concrete pavers of a different texture and color from the street, and masonry or combination masonry/wood walls.

The following recommendations should be considered as signage standards within the corridor:

- ☐ Signs should compliment the architecture of the development.
- ☐ Shared cluster signage should be encouraged for multiple developments, rather than individual signs for each business.
- ☐ Landscaping should be combined with signage. The signage should have the appearance of blending with the character and design of the development rather than "sticking out" as an individual form.

Access and Parking

Quality design elements should include access and parking considerations. **Exhibit 5** illustrates the common problem of development that requires frequent curb cuts on an arterial thoroughfare. Probably the worst situation that should be avoided in the future is the development of residences with direct access onto Buffalo Gap Road. The *Abilene Thoroughfare Plan* identifies standards of access that should be considered along Buffalo Gap Road. For example, along an arterial street, direct access from single family residential development is not recommended. Rather, single family access should be established along local or collector streets only. The *Abilene Thoroughfare Plan* recommends that standard Multi-Family, Office or Commercial zoning not be utilized along the mid-block locations of "Visual Paths" such as Buffalo Gap Road. Instead, it recommends that the Planned Development District be utilized to accommodate landscaping, setbacks, screening and

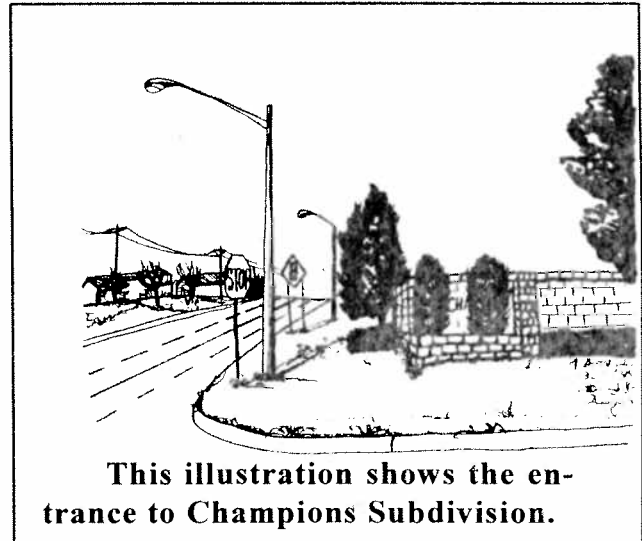


Exhibit 3

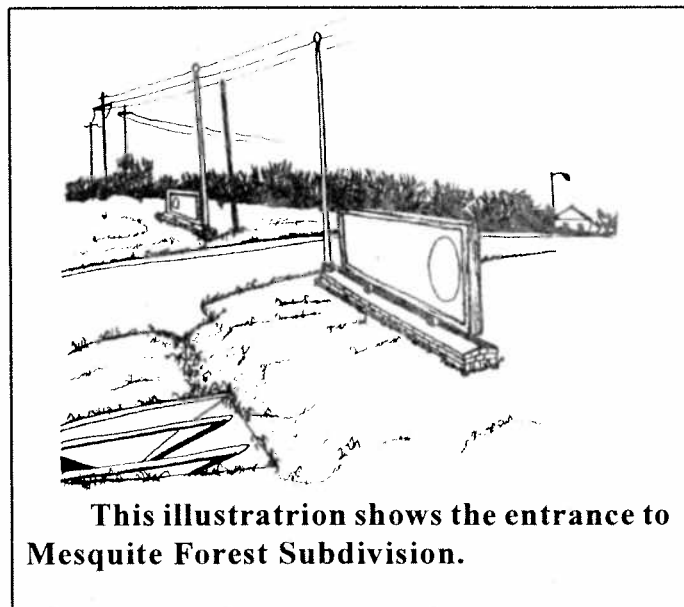


Exhibit 4

Table 14: Minimum Driveway Spacing

Speed (Miles Per Hour)	Spacing (Feet)
30	340
35	450
40	625
45	850
50	1150
55	1500

* Source: Access Management as a Congestion Management Strategy - First National Conference on Access Management, Vail Colorado, August 1-4, 1993

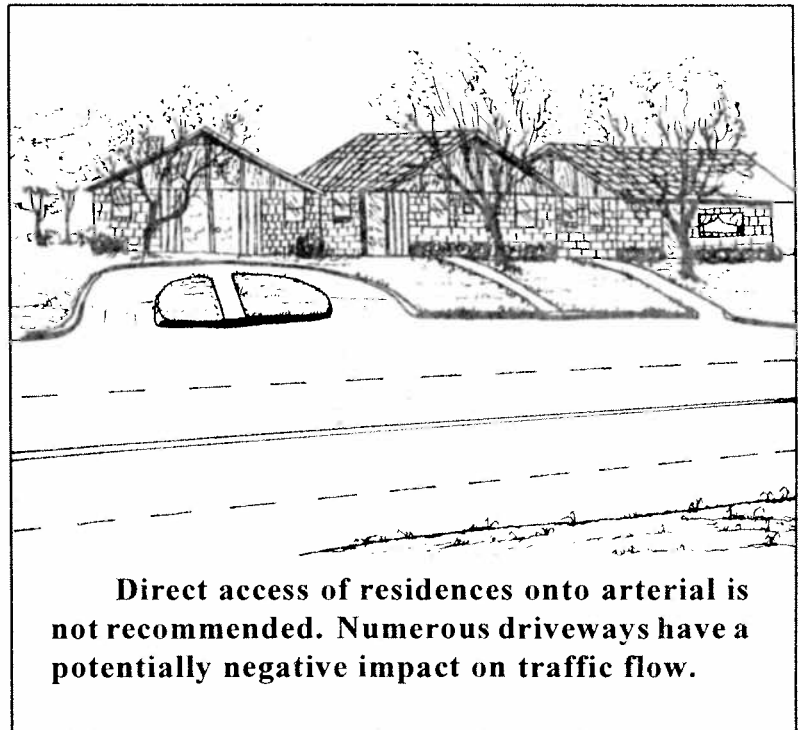


Exhibit 5

integrated design. However as already indicated, many of the vacant parcels along Buffalo Gap Road are not large enough to accommodate PDD zoning. Therefore, staff has recommended low intensity zoning such as O Office or RS.

Access within the O District at the mid-block locations should be limited in order to ensure that traffic congestion is minimized. Appropriate spacing standards between driveways should be considered along Buffalo Gap Road. **Table 14** illustrates the recommended guidelines.

The recommended driveway spacing standards may be difficult to achieve

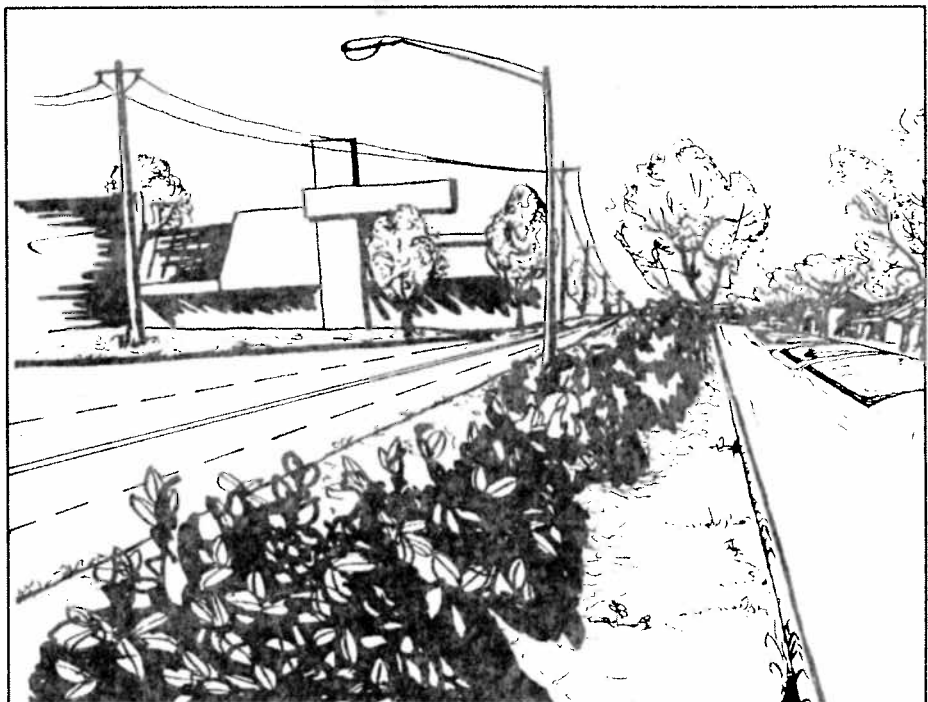


Exhibit 6

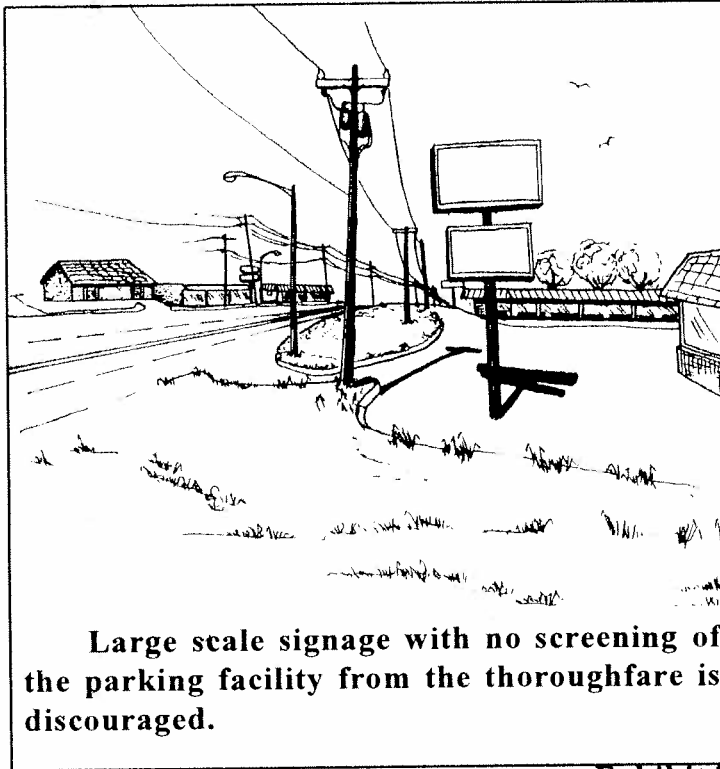


Exhibit 7

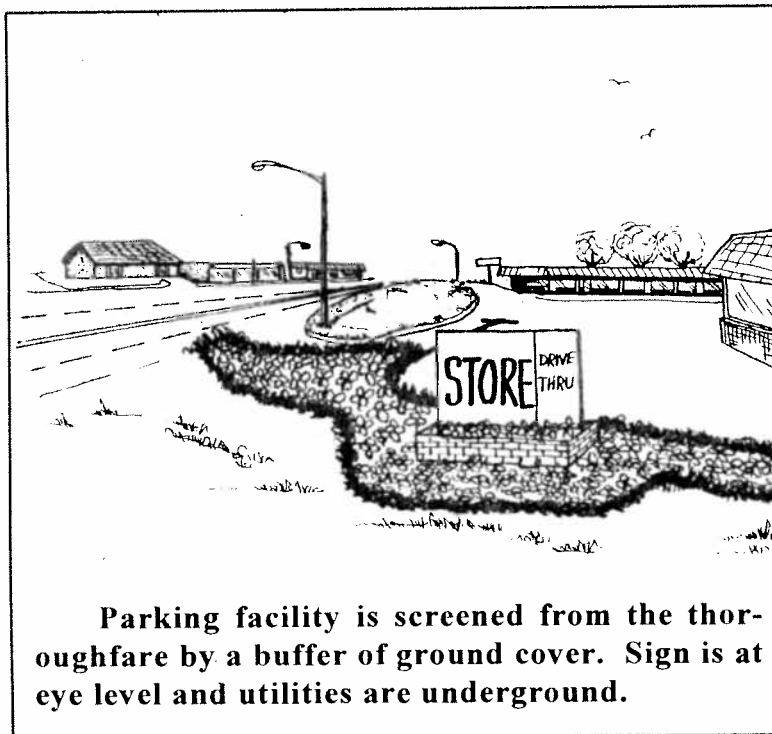


Exhibit 8

for separate developments along an arterial. In those cases, efforts should be made to encourage shared access by multiple developments as a means to achieve the desired standards. The following access recommendations should also be considered:

❑ In the event single family residential development occurs, facing Buffalo Gap Road, a secondary access road should be provided parallel to the thoroughfare and divided by a landscaped visual buffer, similar to development that has already occurred along the north end of the corridor (See Exhibit 6).

❑ Commercial development should have limited access to a neighborhood entrance or local street.

❑ In the event, parking areas are located adjacent to residential areas, adequate landscaping, berming and screening should be provided to lessen any negative impacts. It is noted that screening is required on any side of parking and maneuvering areas closer than 50 feet to and adjoining a residential district. The screening device must be a solid, opaque fence at least (6) feet high.

❑ Parking areas should be screened from Buffalo Gap Road with some form of landscaping or berming or by providing parking at the rear or side of a structure except when the property abuts low density residential uses.

Building Architecture and Orientation

Development within the corridor should have some relationship with the adjacent developments. In

the event commercial structures abut residential structures, at least changes in the height, placement and building materials should be as gradual as possible. Since the only commercial development that is recommended for vacant land at the mid-block locations includes office or public/semi public uses, efforts should be easier in these areas to achieve compatibility with the adjacent single family residential character. Buildings should be developed with materials and styles to resemble single family residential structures.

In cases where commercial/retail uses are recommended at intersection locations, the uses should face away from the residential areas and towards the street frontage. In addition, the bulk or height and square footage of the building should be consistent with the surrounding development. Future commercial developments within the corridor should not overlook residential areas. A large multi-story structure located in close proximity to low density residential uses or low intensity commercial development creates the visual impact of a structure that is out of scale or out of balance with surrounding development.

Landscaping/Buffering

The final design element that is recommended within this corridor is the provision of landscaping and buffering of land uses. As stated by a recent study of Abilene entryways, the purpose for landscaping is to improve the environment; create attractive pleasant surroundings; improve

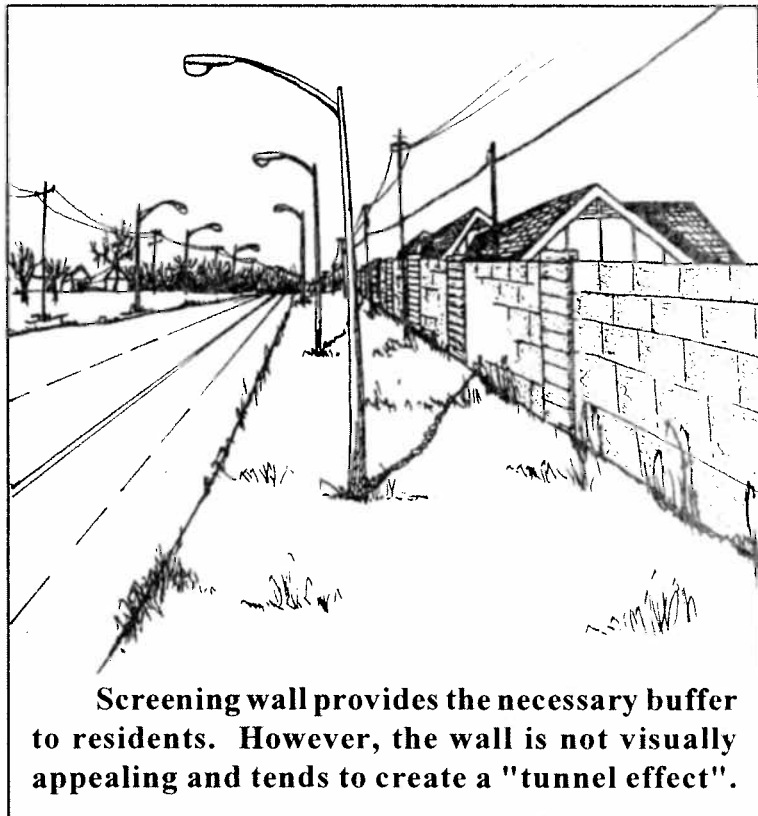


Exhibit 9

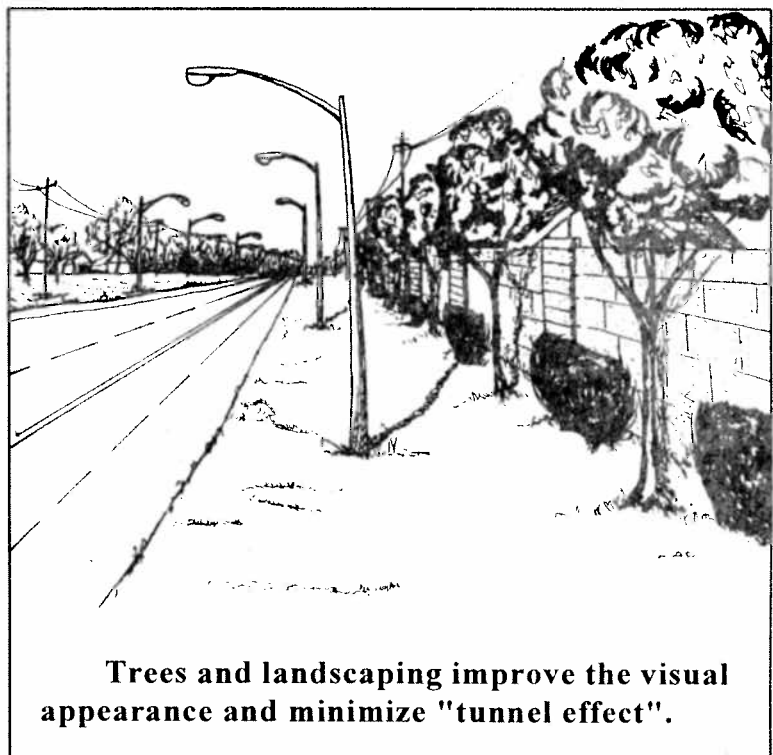


Exhibit 10

public safety; moderate heat, wind and local climatic effects; help control soil erosion; minimize nuisances created by noise and glare; and mitigate negative impacts of adjacent land use activities by creating buffers and screens. The Buffalo Gap Road Corridor provides clear views of the bluffs of the Callahan Divide to the south. Design elements which incorporate landscaping treatments will only enhance the positive images that already exist. Where possible, the planting of trees, ground cover, shrubs and plants adjacent to the right of way will create a positive image for the corridor. For example, in cases where a screening fence is proposed along a property line adjacent to Buffalo Gap Road, efforts should be made to leave enough space for landscaping between the fence and the right of way. An additional depth of ten feet is adequate in most instances. **Exhibit 9** illustrates a fence that is located along the roadway for a long distance. The fence is not only monotonous and unappealing, but creates the visual effect of a tunnel. **Exhibit 10** indicates how that same fence can be turned into a visual asset with the provision of trees and other landscaping materials. Future subdivisions that locate along Buffalo Gap Road should incorporate these types of design considerations.

Landscaping may also be utilized as a buffer between different land use intensities. Examples where landscaping should be considered include:

- ☐ around parking facilities
- ☐ around trash containers
- ☐ around loading and unloading areas
- ☐ between non-compatible land uses (between single family and multi-family, between residential and non-residential, and between light commercial and heavy commercial)
- ☐ in combination with berms, fences, retaining walls, and signage where appropriate

Conclusion

CONCLUSION

The Buffalo Gap Road Corridor serves as one of Abilene's major entrances. It is unique, however, in that it provides a direct link to the tourist and recreation attractions of the Buffalo Gap Historic Village and the Abilene State Park. Impressions of Abilene are made by those who travel through the corridor.

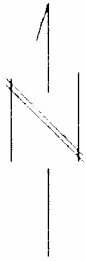
The Buffalo Gap Road Corridor Study was initiated as a response to continued growth and development within the general area, and the public's desire to ensure the integrity and attractiveness of the area. The study has provided a general background of the current development patterns, some recommendations for future land uses in the vacant areas, and some suggested design guidelines. It is the intent of this study to provide a framework upon which future development will occur within the corridor.

Addendum to the Buffalo Gap Road Corridor Land Use Plan

Staff spoke with representatives from Hendrick Medical Center on June 20, 1994. The Hendrick representatives requested that the land use recommendations of the study incorporate the Mesa Springs Retirement Village Planned Development District (PDD 37) passed by the City Council on January 23, 1986. This addendum has therefore, been included to reflect the approved PDD, which is on file in the Planning and Zoning Office.

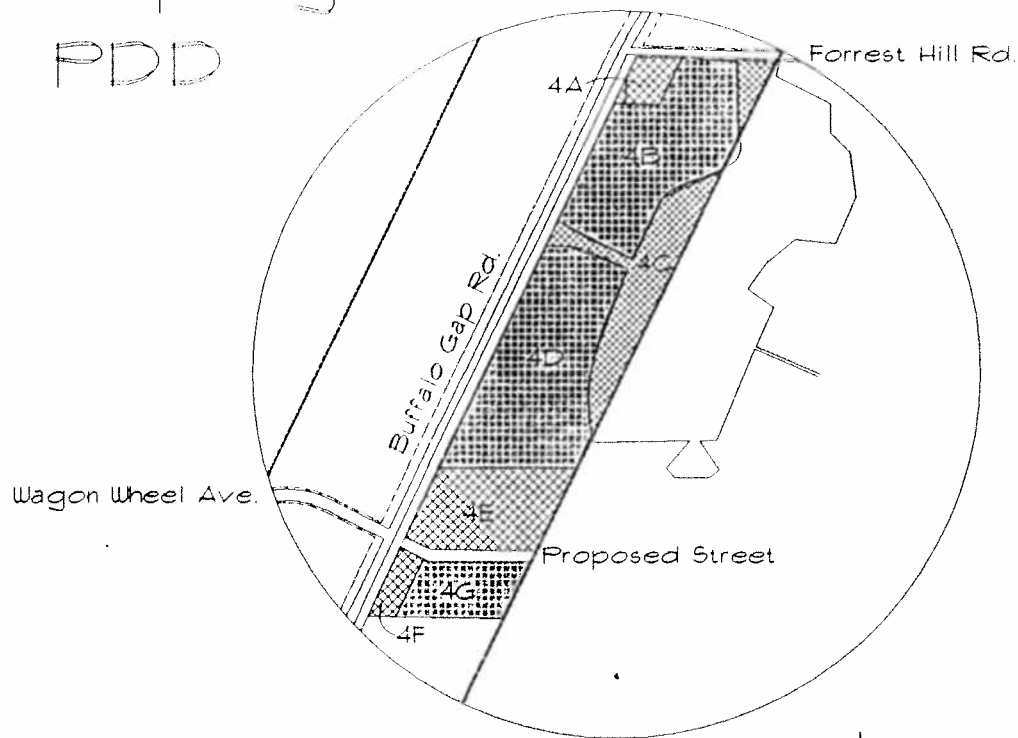
Mesa Springs Retirement Village Land Use Recommendations	
Vacant Lot Number	Recommended Land Use
4A	Limited Commercial
4B	Medium Density or Multi-Family Residential
4C	Existing Structure
4D	Medium Density or Multi-Family Residential
4E	Medical Use
4F	Limited Commercial
4G	Medium Density or Multi-Family Residential

Mesa Springs Retirement Village Planned Development District









Mesa Springs

PDD



Legend

	Vacant		Med./High Density Residential
	Low Density Residential		Office/Commercial
	Semi-Public		
	Public		

Scale (feet)

